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# RELIGION IN LIFE

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## Editorial

THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT, though it is one of the most significant developments of our time, has scarcely touched the relations of Protestants and Roman Catholics. At this point our outlook is too often governed by ancient prejudices, begotten of fear and nourished by ignorance. The needs of our age demand a more creative approach; the temper of our times suggests that a change, limited yet significant, may at length be achieved.

With this important subject our current symposium is concerned. It makes perfectly apparent that if deep-seated antipathies are to be healed, we must bring to the task resources far wider in scope than those which we are normally content to use. Good will is a precondition of progress, but good will alone can accomplish very little. It is not enough to declare a moratorium on abuse. Courtesy alone cannot heal our separation. We are divided by convictions which are sincerely held and which cannot readily be reconciled. The first requisite is more accurate information. The mythologies of misunderstanding have created on each side a picture of the other which is so distorted as to be largely false. It is important that we should know what is happening in Catholic theology, philosophy, and political theory. The patterns which emerge may differ in important aspects from our preconceptions, but the areas of disagreement may remain almost as extensive as before. There are certain beliefs which Protestants cannot accept and which Roman Catholics cannot relinquish.

We must therefore approach the whole problem with a large measure of sober realism. In certain quarters the Pope's call to an ecumenical conference was hailed with naive enthusiasm. This shows how little the true dimensions of our problem have been grasped. The Roman doctrine of the Church makes anything approaching equal or formal negotiation impossible. As our relations grow closer, they will certainly be beset with difficulties. On both sides the disciplines of humility and charity will become urgently necessary. As Dr. Pelikan reminds us, we must accept the constraints which our divisions create, and we must learn to bear one another's burdens. We cannot hope to heal lightly the hurt of Christ's people.

Archbishop Lang of Canterbury once reported a comment made to him by Jowett, the famous master of Balliol College, Oxford. They were discussing duties which Lang expected soon to undertake. "Don't expect to accomplish too much," said Jowett, "but don't attempt to do too little." We might well take to heart these words of wisdom.

G. R. C.

# Approaches to Protestant-Roman Catholic Conversations

## i. Roman Catholicism: New Look in Doctrine

GEORGES A. BARROIS

THIS IRREVERENT TITLE sounds like a challenge, inasmuch as the Church of Rome claims the privilege of unchangeability on the grounds of its course being determined not by men, but by the God "who changeth not." After all, other Christian churches might voice similar claims as well; and it would seem that the Reformers' intent to cut off artificial outgrowths and to revert as far as possible to the faith and practice of the early Christians was but another expression of a common concern of Christianity. This concern is that the Church, on account of its divine origin, cannot suffer to be at the mercy of historical vicissitudes or of the eagerness of men to adapt, alter, or reinterpret their faith for the sake of well-meant but often ill-advised improvements. All would agree that there must be such a thing as basic Christianity, which of course cannot be tampered with, while they do not agree as to the determination of what is basic, and what might legitimately be modified by a Church conscious of its responsibilities. There is a similar disagreement concerning the very nature of such modifications.

Roman scholars recognize that the doctrine and practice of the Church after the Council of Trent differ considerably from the doctrine and practice of, say, the medieval Church, and that the figure of Roman Catholicism today is no longer exactly what it was on the morrow of the Council. Yet they do not interpret such changes as the result of evolution. Indeed, they hold the word "evolution" as taboo, on account of its being misused by those who endeavor to explain the successive modifications of Christian belief by the natural interreaction of historical factors,

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short of any recourse to the God who controls history. Instead, they speak of an internal, "homogeneous" development, whereby the latent potencies of Christian belief are actualized, as it were, by a process of germination wholly in the hands of God.

Our survey of Roman Catholic teachings cannot possibly be kept within strict chronological limits. Several of the important developments which took place during the past decades would be unintelligible if one did not go a half century or more further back. On the other hand, symptoms of further developments occur in our days, but one is reluctant to put on the mantle of prophecy, and the interpretation of mere symptoms calls for nothing more than a reserved prognosis.

## I

The most spectacular advance is in the field of Marian theology. In spite of the popular devotion to the Virgin and of the liturgical commemoration of the various events of her life, early and medieval theological speculations never considered the person and life of Mary as the subject matter of theology, apart from the mystery of Christ. On the contrary, modern Roman Catholicism is characterized by the coming of age of Marian dogmatics as an autonomous discipline.

It began when Pope Pius IX, in the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* (1854), defined the Immaculate Conception of Mary as a revealed dogma of the Church, or, in other words, an essential article of Christian faith. This means that Christians must believe that Mary, in view of her high calling, was immune, through a unique privilege, from the guilt and defilement of original sin, even from the very moment of her being conceived in the womb of her mother. To be sure, this doctrine is not new. It may be regarded as linked organically with the belief of the majority of Christians in the personal saintliness of Mary, as it was manifested in her readiness to answer the call of God, and as it was furthered through her unique relation to Jesus. Did not the angel hail her as the special object of God's favor?

The theological doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was formulated for the first time in 1307 by the Franciscan Duns Scotus, but it was not accepted by all indiscriminately. Already before Scotus, attempts at a recognition of the Immaculate Conception of Mary had been sharply criticized by Saint Bernard who opposed it as a downright innovation, and by Saint Thomas Aquinas, who reasoned that the sanctity of Mary could not possibly be interpreted as an immunity from original sin, otherwise

Mary would not have needed to be saved. Nevertheless the thesis of Scotus had greater popular appeal, his arguments won the assent of most theologians, and the opposition subsided; until, in the first half of the nineteenth century, petitions from Roman Catholics the world over were addressed to the Pope, to the effect that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception be given official status.

The dogmatic definition of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 acted as a powerful catalyst. Liturgical texts and popular devotional practices, as well as pious beliefs concerning the circumstances of Mary's life and death described in legendary writings designed to make up for the laconism of the Gospels, were now being examined from a new standpoint, namely, in view of a theological synthesis.

The next item in this process is the definition of the Assumption as an essential article of Christian faith by Pius XII, in the Bull *Munificentissimus Deus* (1950). Roman Catholics are under strict obligation to hold that the Virgin Mary, when the course of her life was ended by natural death, was taken up body and soul to heaven. Such a belief is not new. The Assumption was commonly accepted as a fact, both in the Eastern and the Western Church, as early as the fourth century and perhaps earlier. What is new is the dogmatic value ascribed to it.

This does not mean that the Roman Church endorses the authenticity of the apocryphal legends which relate the death and the Assumption of Mary. It takes the view that the reality of the Assumption, although it may not be directly established by historical process, is affirmed by the witness of Christian tradition. In the preliminaries to the formula of definition, Pius XII stressed the fact that the doctrine of the Assumption is the logical consequence of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception: Mary, who had not been touched by the contagion of evil, was spared the horror of the grave. Thus what the new definition really does is to take up what was regarded as an event and as an object of devotion, and authoritatively to state its theological significance.

The Papal pronouncements on the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption point to a new understanding of the mission of Mary, of her association in the work of her Son, and of her place in God's plan of redemption. The liturgical celebration of the queenship of Mary, recently instituted, moves in the same direction, and may be considered as a foreboding of further theological developments. The new theology sees in Mary the personification of humanity as it might have grown to be by God's favor, if sin had not altered the course of nature and history, nor

disrupted man's original righteousness. Secondarily, the dignity of Christian womanhood as embodied in the person of Mary may be a timely reminder in our brutal "man's world." At any rate, the accent is on humanity, and on the optimism which Christian faith alone can generate. The general objective somehow is similar to the objective of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, symbol of Jesus' human love for men, as if Roman theology, after stressing the deity of Christ and the essentially divine character of his mission, felt the need to reaffirm that he was fully man, born of a woman.

On the other hand, Mary's exceptional privileges exalt her above the common level of man. She is ascribed a power of intercession exceeding by far the exercise of active solidarity which Roman theologians suppose between the Church on earth and the Church triumphant. The difference is not a difference of degree; Mary's alleged power belongs in another order. While the Roman Church teaches that the saints in glory hear the prayers of men and relay them to God, Mary is believed to contribute properly and positively to the work of redemption and the bestowal of grace upon men. Eastern Orthodoxy requires her intercession because she is the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ, but Roman Catholics are invited to think of her as the associate partner of her Son. She is actually co-redeemer, and not only the mother of the Redeemer. The theme of the mediation of Mary and her office as co-redeemer are in the line of the dogmatic development heralded by the definitions of the Immaculate Conception and of the Assumption. While no pronouncements on this subject have been made so far, and while no official move seems to be in the offing, it is not unlikely that further dogmatic definitions might occur in a not-too-distant future. For the time being, the matter is being thoroughly studied by Roman Catholic exegetes, liturgists, and theologians.

The recent developments of Marian theology and the implied recognition of the coredemptive function of Mary probably do not contradict the central affirmation of Christian faith that there is no other mediator between God and men except Jesus Christ. Mary remains a creature and a subordinate in the plan of redemption. Official theology keeps clear from popular "Mariolatry," superstitious worship, and the gross error of illiterate Roman Catholics who believe that it is in Mary's power to stay the course of divine justice or to overrule Providence. However, the unique prerogatives of the God-man are singularly obscured, when Mary is credited with privileges and functions which properly belong to the Savior, but which are unjustifiably duplicated by an artificial cleavage of the Christological dogma.

## II

The procedure preparatory to the Marian pronouncements shows forth a certain modification of the Roman Catholic notion of Tradition as an instrument of divine revelation and source of the dogma of the Church. This modification is less spectacular than the contents of the dogmatic definitions of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of Mary. Unlike the proclamation of Papal infallibility by the Council of the Vatican (1870), what appears to be a new trend in doctrinal methodology goes very much unheralded and unheeded. In its time, the dogma of Papal infallibility had made the headlines, but the new interpretation of Catholic tradition is likely to leave laymen unconcerned, in spite of its basic importance. For it amounts to nothing less than a radical departure from the methods developed after the Council of Trent for investigating the sources of Catholic doctrine.

The Council had placed unwritten Apostolic Tradition on a par with Scripture as the objective foundation of Christian faith over against the Reformers' principle, "Scripture alone." Accordingly, Roman Catholic theologians and apologists were bent upon justifying the dogma, teachings, and policies of their Church on the basis of historical continuity. The ideal would have been to trace them back to the days of the Apostles and to consider them as the echo of the unrecorded words of Christ, which his disciples would have handed down by word of mouth to subsequent generations of Christians. Thus the task of Catholic scholars was clearly cut, viz., to search the documents of history, patristic and theological literature, popular legends and usages, liturgical texts and monuments of Christian art in which primitive tradition, in itself elusive, had presumably become embodied. This was in reality an attempt at working out in practice the theory formulated in the fifth century by Vincent of Lerins, when he defined Catholic truth as "that which had been believed everywhere, always, and by all men." The Benedictines of the Congregation of St. Maur, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, undoubtedly excelled in this type of historical research, which has been carried on ever since.

Several of the preliminary studies undertaken with a view to ascertaining the definability of the Marian dogmas were conducted in the manner just described, and some reference is made to them in the pontifical documents. However, it could not be ignored that some of the earlier sources were not above suspicion. For instance, the earliest testimonies relative to the Assumption are found in a series of apocryphal writings, the orthodoxy

of which is, to say the least, questionable. They originated in heretical circles and were circulated in Jerusalem for reasons akin to greed and ecclesiastical ambition, on account of the impression they made on pilgrims, gullible and generous. The Bull *Munificentissimus Deus* does not quote them, and the earliest witness called to the bar of tradition in this document is St. John Damascene (d. after 754), who accepted the legend in good faith, endeavoring to buttress it with arguments of theological convenience. It looks as if the Pope felt that the testimony of history, in this particular instance, is not entirely reliable.

More generally, Rome has indeed become wary of what Pius XII denounced in the encyclical *Humani Generis* (1950) under the label "historicism," namely, the tendency to explain every happening, spiritual or material, as the product of determinism, disregarding the freedom which men have to transcend the blind forces of nature and history and the power which God has to overrule them. Incidentally, there is no contradiction involved in the same pontifical document reaffirming the substantial historicity of the first three chapters of Genesis, for historicity here is opposed to the free interpretation of the biblical narrative on the basis of mythological symbolism, an interpretation which Rome rejects as falling short of its object and which it regards as just another manifestation of rationalism.

Now if this be true that the historical process is not commensurate with the dogmatic structure of which it is the foundation, then another foundation must be laid. The ascertaining of Catholic tradition in view of the Marian definitions was secured on the basis of petitions expressing the desire of the hierarchy and the laity in all the parts of the Catholic world. This was no longer a title search, but a referendum. Such a procedure would have been abhorrent to the Council of Trent. In the days of the Reformation, Rome could not very well afford to call for a popular consultation. On the surface the new procedure looks democratic, and in a sense it is. No longer are the conclusions of a body of experts regarded as the adequate basis for dogmatic pronouncements, but the pious desires of the people; no longer Tradition as preserved in the archives of the past, but living Tradition, throbbing in the hearts of God's people.

There is here, undoubtedly, a partial recovery of the communal nature of the Church, inasmuch as the Church makes its voice heard in matters of doctrine. At least in theory, the scrutinizing of Scripture and Tradition, the learned deductions of theologians and the elaboration of systems need not, yea, ought not, to take place in isolation from the aspirations and

cravings of the masses, the insights of the saints and mystics. On the other hand, it would seem that the objective standards of the faith, viz., Scripture and Tradition, are somehow by-passed. More exactly, a new, subjective dimension is added, as if the ways of determining the faith of the Church, as advocated by the Council of Trent, were not decisive in themselves. Indeed, they never were. The Council had made it plain that decisions in doctrinal matters were not left to individual scholars or theological schools, but belonged properly to ecclesiastical authority. However, this appeal to hierarchic authority was seen as subsidiary to Scripture and Tradition, defined as the twofold organ of divine revelation. Today the *magisterium ecclesiae*, that is, the authority of the hierarchy to decide in matters of faith and morals, has passed to the foreground, whether it expresses itself through ecumenical councils or in *ex cathedra* pronouncements by the Pope himself. Now, such pronouncements cannot very well be regarded as normal teaching procedures, but rather as doctrinal injunctions.

The new procedure for the ascertaining of Tradition, namely, by receiving or even inviting the expression of the people's feelings, and the reliance of the Church on the "catholic instinct" of its members, shows a certain affinity to the type of ecclesiology known in Orthodoxy as *sobornost*, according to which the faith of the Church expresses itself ultimately in the life of the Christian community, inasmuch as the power of the Holy Spirit is at work in the souls of Christians. But the similarity stops here. Quite incidentally the *sobornost* conception of the Church is not equally shared by all the Orthodox, and those among the Hellenes who accept it do not do so without reservations. Furthermore, Orthodoxy as a whole has always lived, and lives, on the unchallenged truth of the seven ecumenical councils, of which the hierarchy of the five Patriarchates claims to be the divinely appointed guardian. Now the councils were never democratic assemblies, but their members "convened together with the Holy Ghost" for interpreting Scripture and determining the dogma of the Church. On this doctrinal foundation, life goes on, and it is a fact that Orthodoxy has proved its vitality in the face of grueling difficulties from within and from without, which it has experienced in the course of its history. The doctrinal foundation of Orthodoxy, as described above, makes new dogmatic pronouncements unlikely and unnecessary. In view of the doctrinal and structural evolution of the Western Church, on the contrary, it would appear that definitions from Rome in matters of faith and morals have become almost unavoidable.

## III

A distinctive feature of twentieth-century Catholicism is the coming of age of Ecclesiology. The very nature of the Church had always been taken more or less for granted. The Church just was there, and there was no need, so it seemed, to speculate concerning its essence. A theology of the Church was at best embryonic, and generally limited to an academic commentary on the Nicene Creed: "I believe in the Church, one, catholic, and apostolic."

The course of history in our days has forced a reconsideration of the theology of the Church, and both external circumstances and matters of internal administration act as a potent stimulus for confronting theologians with the need of rethinking the Church in relation to concrete problems which do not admit of an empirical solution, but demand that a clear picture be drawn of what the Church is and what it is called to undertake and eventually to achieve. Now this new theology is still in the making; its conclusions are tentative, although its general orientation becomes every day more evident. It has not yet reached the stage of being printed black on white in textbooks for seminarians—everybody knows that textbooks are usually from twenty-five to fifty years behind the actual facts. It can be sketched provisionally, however, on the basis of recent pontifical documents and decisions urging ways and means to meet the situations in which the Church finds itself surrounded, in the midst of a world foreign to, or alienated from, Christianity.

The theological "motives," in the sense of "dominant features," underlying the modern policies of Roman Catholicism, are the monarchic structure of the Papal Church, and its inclusiveness. These two principles do not conflict, as one might imagine at first sight; they are rather to be regarded as complementing each other. We may see them at work in the following survey of the areas of activity in which the Roman Church had to solve problems of practical import, while the core of these problems is in itself theological.

Roman Catholic authorities could not possibly remain indifferent in the presence of the rise and growth of ecumenism during the past decades, paralleling the wave of international co-operation which followed two world wars and which resulted in the creation of international organisms like the League of Nations and the United Nations. From the outset, however, Rome had adopted an attitude of extreme reserve toward the ecumenical movement, sponsored as it was by Protestants, who took the initiative in organizing conferences and who created the World Council

of Churches as a permanent bond between non-Roman Christians separated from each other by man-drawn denominational boundaries. Rome could not possibly join as party to a movement initiated by dissident ecclesiastical bodies. For, in the eyes of Roman Catholics, there can be only one Church, the unity of which is made visible in the person of the Pope as successor of St. Peter. Catholic ecumenism demands that the authority of the Pope be unconditionally recognized by all, not indeed as a matter of political expediency, but as an essential act of Catholic faith, on the basis of the dogma of the Church. With this there can be no tampering.

However, the style of the Curia, especially when addressing non-Roman Christians, has considerably changed of late. Rome does not speak any more of schismatics or of heretics, but of "our separated brethren," victims of the breakdown of Christendom, but scarcely responsible for it. The atmosphere of suspicion which had brought to an end the so-called "Conversations at Malines," initiated by the late Cardinal Mercier, has given way to a genuine interest on the part of Rome in the Protestant attempts at renewing contacts between ecclesiastical bodies which had thus far ignored or censured each other. It is significant that one of the first acts of Pope John XXIII was to announce his intention of calling an ecumenical council to the assembled College of Cardinals, and through the encyclical *Ad Petri Cathedram* (1959). Exploratory contacts are being established between ecclesiastical persons especially designated by the Holy See and representatives of Eastern Orthodoxy, and even the possibility of conversations with Protestant leaders is not excluded *a priori*. It is, of course, premature to make any prognostics as to what may be achieved by such conversations, which, according to rumors (or gossip), may have been called off. One thing, however, is certain. Rome is by no means willing to negotiate a plan of union on the basis of a doctrinal compromise.

This becomes particularly evident if one considers the reactions of the Vatican toward those centrifugal forces which, from time to time, induce some diocesan authorities into coming to terms on their own with governments hostile to the rule of the Roman Church. Rome is dead set against anything akin to autonomy or against the creation of national Churches at the expense of their ties of allegiance to the Holy See. Such movements, obviously encouraged by the government of Red China, were condemned by Pius XII in the encyclicals *Ad Sinarum Gentem* (1955) and *Ad Apostolorum Principis* (1958). Pope John XXIII has voiced a similar displeasure in recent letters and discourses, and the Congregation of the Council—a department of Papal administration—has excommunicated several

priests who refused to resign from political functions which they held in Communist Hungary, in violation of a decree of the same Congregation forbidding clerics to seek or to retain such appointments.

While Rome rebukes such dissenters with all sternness, it considers Uniatism, i.e., the integration of Eastern Churches into the Roman communion under the supreme jurisdiction of the Pope, as a pilot project in ecumenism. The principle of inclusiveness and the monarchic principle find here their full application. On the one hand these churches retain their customs, their liturgy, their discipline. On the other hand they are strictly controlled by the Congregation for Oriental Churches. Pius XII, through his apostolic letters *Cleri sanctitati* (1957), prefaced the publication of special canons determining the status of Uniate clergy, in co-ordination with the corresponding section of Roman ecclesiastical law.

#### IV

The principles underlying modern Roman ecclesiology, viz., comprehensiveness and monarchic structure, are equally displayed in the recent policies concerning foreign missions. In this field, a thorough revision of objectives and a general overhauling of structures and methods was long overdue. The necessary modernization of the missionary enterprise began under the pontificate of Pius XI, the "Pope of Missions," who issued in 1926 the encyclical *Rerum Ecclesiae*, in which the missionary program of the Roman Church was clearly outlined. It marks a clean departure from the nineteenth-century conception of Christian missions linked, as it were, with political colonialism, the fast disintegration of which was correctly foreseen by the Vatican.

The work of reorganization was carried on with increased momentum under the reign of Pius XII, as may be gathered from his encyclical *Evangelii Praecones* (1950), and from numerous decrees of the Roman congregations having jurisdiction in missionary matters. A consistent pattern may be observed: Rome is anxious to replace the provisional jurisdiction of Apostolic Prefects or Vicars by a full-fledged hierarchy, as soon as local conditions permit. The missionary districts of yesterday become regular dioceses. One of the urgent tasks assigned to foreign missionaries is the formation of an indigenous clergy, from the ranks of which Bishops and Archbishops are to be chosen. It is felt that Christianity does not stand in direct ratio to the type or degree of secular culture, and Rome regards it unnecessary, and even harmful, to require from all Christians that they should first conform to the mannerisms of the Latin countries

in which the Western Church first developed. The Protestant counterpart of this process of emancipation is the recognition of the so-called "younger Churches," which avail themselves of the service not of foreign missionaries, but of fraternal workers. In both cases, there is a strong desire to dispel the impression that there are two categories of Christians, viz., those who stand on their own feet and those who have to be cared for as fledglings for any length of time.

In view of recent political and social disturbances in territories formerly under colonial rule, one may wonder whether Rome, for once, did not move too fast. Church authorities are much concerned with the reckless participation of several African priests (or ex-priests) in revolutionary movements, and we have mentioned above the desire to autonomy expressed by some members of the Catholic hierarchy in Red China, and denounced by the Pope. Such difficulties, however, are of a circumstantial nature, and may be dealt with by prudent administrative or disciplinary measures. The policy as a whole is not challenged, and the underlying theology needs apparently no revision.

## V

One of the most significant moves of the Roman Church in recent years is the official acknowledgment of the part which the laity might and ought to play, for the diffusion of the Gospel in a dechristianized society, or in a society the Christian veneer of which has become worn out. For centuries lay men and women had been regarded as having their station at the receiving end of the line. They were being baptized, indoctrinated, administered, disciplined, and spiritually provided for by the clergy, to which it belonged constitutionally to lay down the law, to make decisions, and generally to be responsible for the welfare of God's people. Nothing else was required from the laity than obediently to submit to the commandments and ministrations of the Church. The hardship of two world wars, the social and moral restlessness and feeling of frustration which followed, the obvious futility and irrelevancy of conventional routines in religion, the advance of materialism and a widespread cynicism in seeking immediate advantages swept away all those whose Christian faith was not firmly rooted. In view of the ensuing vacuum, the hierarchy soon realized that its efforts at rechristianizing society would be of little or of no avail, unless Christianity in action were exhibited by the people themselves. Not only would their faith and life deepen, but their testimony might gain back those who had strayed and who no longer paid any attention to the voice of the shepherds.

The mustering of lay forces for the defense and promotion of the Church came to be known as Catholic Action. This generic title covers the co-ordinated activities of lay men and women who carry out on a voluntary basis various forms of Christian endeavor, subject to the control of the hierarchy. Hence associations of Catholic students, or of professional people, or of industrial and agricultural workers, leagues for the defense of public morality, Church-approved fraternal orders and brotherhoods, inasmuch as they aim at furthering Catholic faith and ideals in the world, may be regarded as the manifold organs or manifestations of Catholic Action. The name itself, first used by Pius XI, admits of no strict definition, nor does it have any juridical connotation. By their very nature, the movements integrated under Catholic Action are essentially conditioned by the actual course of human situations and local circumstances. Thus the encyclical *Non abbiamo bisogno* (1931), while stating general principles, dealt chiefly with the difficulties which Catholic Action faced in Italy under the Fascist regime. There is no doubt that by formulating a program of Catholic Action, even in most general terms, the Holy See hopes to return a certain degree of initiative and of responsibility to the laity, provided that lay endeavors and associations remain strictly controlled by the hierarchy.

This recognition of the active co-operation of the laity in the total mission of the Church is not merely a matter of policy. It originates in a new theory of the organic structure of the Church, or rather in a recovery of theological values which had become obscured or distorted. The fact, however, that the work of the laity continues to be regarded as essentially different from, and subordinate to, the hierarchical ministry, will prevent Catholic Action from being hailed yet as a positive step toward a full recovery of the concept of the universal priesthood of believers.

## 2. Philosophy in Catholic Life

JAMES COLLINS

**A**N ANALYSIS of contemporary Catholicism cannot afford to overlook the marked role of philosophy in forming the Catholic mind. That role is perhaps stronger today than at any previous time in the past century. Hence a brief survey of the present state of Catholic philosophical studies will help to give a sound footing to the problem of understanding and improving Protestant-Catholic relations.

### I. INSTITUTIONAL CONCERN ABOUT PHILOSOPHY

A striking fact is that the Catholic Church, in many of its official acts, shows a lively concern about the various traditions and trends in philosophy. It is interested both in the philosophical training of its own members, particularly the college students and seminarians, and also in the currents of thought which influence our cultural and public life. This interest is not sporadic and informal but stems from a persistent attitude and gets embodied in official policies. Thus it is highly significant that, when the Code of Canon Law was being revised and pared down, it was considered important enough to include a broad regulation of philosophical as well as theological teaching according to the basic method and principles of St. Thomas Aquinas.<sup>1</sup> Instructions from the Roman Congregation concerned with the quality of teaching in seminaries and colleges often bear upon the kind of instruction to be given in philosophical subjects. Other official expressions can be seen in the inclusion of recent philosophy books in the Index of Forbidden Books; such books can be read when permission is obtained, but their presence on this list indicates how seriously philosophical ideas are taken. In addition, many papal encyclicals issued during our century deal briefly but incisively with philosophical views ranging from agnosticism and historicism to dialectical-historical materialism and existentialism.

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<sup>1</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 1366, paragraph 2. For a convenient collection of papal pronouncements on philosophy, especially that of Aquinas, see J. Maritain, *St. Thomas Aquinas* (revised second ed., New York: Meridian Books, 1958), 119-45, 179-266.

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In these several ways, the Catholic Church acknowledges the deep human influence of philosophical thought, its involvement for better or for worse in the work of redemption, and hence the special responsibility it places upon men of faith to deal with its various forms. We cannot think away or theologically legislate away the fact that what men hold on philosophical issues profoundly affects the direction and quality of their response to the Christian message. The Catholic concern about philosophy is fundamentally governed by this solidarity often found to exist between a man's philosophical convictions and his attitude of openness or closure to Christian revelation.

It is only because of this bearing of some philosophical doctrines upon questions of faith and morals that Catholics are willing to accept and live with a double set of risks, which they might otherwise imperturbably avoid.<sup>2</sup> One group of perennial questions centers around the use of particular philosophical concepts and theories to state and explain the act and the content of Christian faith. Is the word of God colored, limited, and perhaps radically transformed by being treated through these human philosophical means? The other set of problems is generated by the practicing philosopher who is anxious to preserve his integrity of profession. Does the commitment to faith so influence and regulate a man's philosophical thinking that he loses all real freedom of investigation and interrogation? These probings are rendered specially acute for the Catholic philosopher by his acceptance of the authority of the Church in matters of faith and morals. But he does his work within the situation of complex tensions between the integrity of faith and that of philosophy. His acceptance of the tensions involves a steady war against the two extreme positions of paganizing the Christian faith and destroying the genuine activity of the philosophical mind.

## II. THE TEACHING OF THOMISM

The philosophy and theology of St. Thomas Aquinas are basic to most contemporary Catholic education and Catholic responses to the intellectual challenges of our time. To some extent in Europe and more markedly in America, the prevailing Catholic attitude is that we can find in Thomism a sound method of philosophizing, a permanent set of principles, and a body of doctrine relevant to our modern problems. Sometimes the Thomistic teaching is viewed as a completed and closed universe containing

<sup>2</sup> Consult A. Dondeyne, *Contemporary European Thought and Christian Faith* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1958).

all the answers to our human difficulties, but this attitude is hard to sustain in practice. The more sensible and workable position (as well as the one coming closest to the mind of Aquinas himself) is that the Thomistic sources provide a broad foundation for grasping the basic natural truths about God and man's relation to Him. It also has an assimilative power and keeps the mind open to genuine advances in our modern exploration of the regions of nature, man, and religious experience.

As it is actually offered in American Catholic colleges today, the course in Thomistic philosophy begins with a combined introduction to philosophy and study of formal logic. Many teachers follow Aristotle's example of working inductively through the pre-Socratic positions and Plato on such classical questions as change, generation, multiplicity, relation, and causality. They go on to sketch Aristotle's synthesis, mention the distinctive contribution of Judeo-Christian revelation, and indicate the Thomistic way of uniting faith and reason.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the introductory course focuses on the typical modern problems of knowledge, mind and body, and the relation among the sciences. Formal logic is usually presented in a severely schematic way, remotely based on Aristotle, but in fact drawing upon modern manuals and giving some notion of scientific induction and mathematical logic. Under this program, the beginner comes to regard philosophy as an age-long constructive achievement of the human mind furnishing some permanent truths, some recurrent problems, and some reliable tools for the continued study of experience.

The core of the Thomistic curriculum consists of courses in the philosophy of nature and man, the philosophy of being and God, and ethics.<sup>4</sup> A quick look at the Thomistic textbooks in use is apt to be misleading, since the uniformity in terminology and ultimate conclusions masks some lively disagreements about the method and evidence and major principles. For instance, some Thomistic teachers treat the philosophy of nature as the underlying discipline along with logic, whereas others relegate it (apart from the doctrine on man) to a peripheral position. This issue revolves around the relation between Aristotelian and modern physics. Present-day Thomists are divided on the meaning of modern physics and the relation it

<sup>3</sup> De Raeymaecker, L., *Introduction to Philosophy* (New York: Wagner, 1948).

<sup>4</sup> The following is a list of representative textbooks used in many American Catholic colleges: F. D. Wilhelmen, *Men's Knowledge of Reality: An Introduction to Thomistic Epistemology* (Prentice-Hall, 1956); G. P. Kibertanz, S.J., *Introduction to the Philosophy of Being* (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1955); G. P. Klubertanz, S.J., *The Philosophy of Human Nature* (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1953); V. E. Smith, *The General Science of Nature* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1958); M. R. Holloway, S.J., *An Introduction to Natural Theology* (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959); V. J. Bourke, *Ethics* (The Macmillan Company, 1951).

should have with the Aristotelian physics. Some want to retain the latter as an integrating approach to nature, other teachers distinguish sharply between the philosophy and the science of Aristotle and Aquinas, and still others take modern scientific concepts as they find them without working out any detailed integration. In any case, the alert student is soon introduced to the life of philosophical controversy and the challenge posed by Galileo, Newton, and Einstein.

As the teaching program moves into the area of being, God, and man, the student also becomes aware of the unique vision of Aquinas on these matters. It is no longer taken for granted that Thomism is a sort of baptized Aristotelian philosophy, even though the decisive Aristotelian contribution is recognized. But the Neo-Platonic influence is also pointed out and sometimes exaggerated; the heritage of St. Augustine and the other Fathers is weighed; and above all, attention is now being paid to the impact of Aquinas' faith in the free creative God of Christianity upon his entire philosophical position. What emerges from this approach is a juster, although far more complex, appreciation of Aquinas in relation to his entire intellectual background.

As it is now being presented, the Thomistic metaphysics or philosophy of being is not a deductive process working out from arbitrarily set definitions. Instead, the student is asked to look in our ordinary experience for the rootings of metaphysical principles and the evidence for inference. This experiential grounding helps to overcome the naturalistic objection that every theistic outlook must be *a priori* and arbitrary. This accent upon an analysis of the existing world and the being of man is profoundly affecting the presentation of the Thomistic philosophy of God. The student is invited to combine a firm respect for the mystery of God's own being with a rigorous search after the traces of God found in our natural world of men and things. God's own transcendence is not violated by our search for the evidence in experience which will provide intellectual backing for the philosophical statements we make about God. The "proofs" in question do not make God Himself subject to the outcome of human inquiry, but they do show the warrant for our philosophical propositions about Him. And they do provide a reasonable basis for challenging the naturalistic commonplaces of our day. While respecting the mystery of God, we need not stand dumb in an age of intellectually resourceful atheism.

Finally, the Thomistic courses on man and ethics build upon the analyses of nature, being, and our bond with God. In this way, the student

learns to take a contexted view of human nature and conduct and to see the relevance of the rest of our experience and reflective work upon our conception of human destiny. The total effect of the philosophy curriculum is to encourage people to join a sense of man's uniqueness with a concern for his relations with the rest of the natural world and his responsibility toward God. It is toward cultivating this balanced frame of mind that the Catholic philosophy teacher works, although, of course, the results are uneven and require constant self-criticism.

### III. THE WORK OF GILSON AND MARITAIN

Especially in the English-speaking world, Catholic philosophical discussion is dominated by the achievements of Etienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain. Building on the spadework of continental researchers, Gilson has worked a revolution both in the general history of medieval philosophy and in our historical understanding of St. Thomas.<sup>5</sup> He has made two capital points which serve to correct some conventional misconceptions. First, against the incredible persuasion that the human intelligence could somehow freeze over and stay dormant during a thousand-year span, he has brought forward the detailed story of technical philosophical speculations in the age reaching from Augustine to Cusanus. And second, against the simplification which would picture medieval philosophy as a repetition of the Greek experience with some external adaptations to Christianity, he has brought to focus the intimate and abiding influence of revelation upon medieval philosophical thought. The concept of a "Christian philosophy" has a paradoxical sound for those who suppose either that faith is corrupted by the touch of reason or that rational inquiry is corrupted by giving heed to faith. But it does correspond to a historical reality—the ways of philosophical reflection during the Middle Ages—and Gilson claims that it also contains fruitful possibilities for the contemporary mind. Thanks to his historical research, Catholics are much readier today than a generation ago to acknowledge some kind of powerful influence of Christian faith upon their philosophizing, even though they submit their results to the common canons of inquiry.

Gilson also restores the philosophy of St. Thomas to its theological setting. He presents a St. Thomas who is primarily and professionally a theologian or teacher of sacred doctrine, in the service of which it is

<sup>5</sup> The two basic works of E. Gilson are: *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (Random House, 1955); *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Random House, 1956).

necessary to develop the resources of philosophy. This is not merely a restatement of the role of philosophy as handmaid to theology but an insistence upon the direct influence of revelation on the philosophical thinking of Aquinas. This is seen strikingly in the way Aquinas accords the primacy to being or the subsistent act of existing as the most proper divine name, as well as in his view of God as a truly creative, free, and providential agent. The Christian impact is also noticed in the Thomistic teaching on man as a person, human freedom of choice, personal immortality (which is not opposed to the resurrection-article of Christian belief), the vision of God as the satisfying end of man, and the friendship which can spring up between man and God. At a more metaphysical level, Gilson also stresses the importance of the existential judgment and the act of existing. He sees in St. Thomas the only radically existential thinker in the history of philosophy.

An attempt is going on now to assess and assimilate Gilson's findings. One problem concerns how to adjust the stress upon the existential aspect of being with the traditional teaching on our capacity to know the essential features of things. Another point of discussion among Catholic philosophers who are also college teachers is the proper order in which to present Thomistic philosophy. Gilson advocates our following roughly the order of St. Thomas' *Summa Theologiae*, that is, beginning with a theory of God and creation, and only thereafter dealing with the central metaphysical questions, man, and the rest of the experienced world. This order runs counter to the usual presentation but it is being tried in some colleges.

On this latter issue, Maritain suggests rather that we should now follow the order of inference proper to philosophy, as well as study the sources of evidence belonging to it. For him, the philosophical order begins with human reality and the things of our experience. Intellectual analysis of the structure and implications of sensible things provides the warrant for moving philosophically to the truth about God's transcendent reality. The Christian philosopher must remain responsive both to the insights of faith and to the formal requirements of philosophy, resting as it does upon what reason and the senses can tell us about ourselves and the ways of natural things.

Maritain's approach stems from his lifelong preoccupation with the intellectual and practical difficulties in modern culture. His method is the complex one of making a sympathetic interior exploration of the achievements and problems of our time and bringing to bear upon them his open-

ended Thomism.<sup>6</sup> In the philosophy of science, his fundamental distinction between the ontological disciplines (directed toward the structure of being in its several aspects) and the empiriological modern sciences (directed toward mathematical explanation and technological control of nature) governs most of the Catholic inquiries, even when it fails to win full assent. Maritain's vigorously positive approach to democracy and its relation with an outlook of Christian freedom, personal integrity, and social concern has prodded many Catholics to move beyond a somewhat neutral and highly theoretical attitude toward modern political and social life. Here he is being supported by the researches of Yves Simon and J. C. Murray, S.J., into civil society, political forms, and the Church's historical relations thereto. Unfortunately, Maritain's equally original researches into philosophical aspects of mysticism and esthetic experience have not yet been followed up by any notable work by other Catholic philosophers.

#### IV. NON-THOMISTIC ACTIVITIES

To give a balanced report on the condition of present Catholic philosophy, we must correct the common impression that all the work is being done by Thomists and that "Thomism" is simply the discreet equivalent for "the Catholic viewpoint in philosophy." In point of fact, there is a pluralism of philosophical standpoints among Catholics today and it can perhaps be expected to become more pronounced in the near future. Considerable historical effort is being expended to recover the precise and full doctrines of the patristic writers and the schoolmen other than Aquinas. Some tentative starts are being made in synthesizing the concrete, historical approach of Augustine with salvageable elements in existentialism, but so far there is no major fruit to single out. Intensive American research has resulted in a good series of monographs on such Franciscan thinkers as Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham.<sup>7</sup> Some modern textbooks are being written in this tradition and can be expected to have an influence, but the relevance of these thinkers to our present way of philosophizing still remains to be shown.

There is a noticeable trend among younger Catholic minds to disaffiliate themselves from the traditional schools, to cease being party men without

<sup>6</sup> There is a new, competent translation of J. Maritain's basic work, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, by G. Phelan (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959); see *The Social and Political Philosophy of Jacques Maritain*, edited by J. W. Evans and L. R. Ward (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955). Also, Y. R. Simon, *Philosophy of Democratic Government* (University of Chicago Press, 1951), and "A Church-State Anthology: The Work of Father Murray," edited by V. R. Yanitelli, S.J., in *Thought*, vol. 27 (1952), pp. 6-42.

<sup>7</sup> See the publications of The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, New York; A. B. Wolter, O.F.M., *Summula Metaphysicae* (Bruce Publishing Co., 1958).

ceasing to study the great sources, and to reserve their main energy for direct participation in the going philosophical dialogue. Once the preliminary formation in some variety of Thomism is obtained, it is becoming increasingly the custom for European Catholics and American Catholics trained abroad to pursue their professional work within the framework of twentieth-century preoccupations. One can see this tendency by thumbing through the pages of such representative journals as *The Modern Schoolman*, *The New Scholasticism*, *The Thomist*, *Revue Philosophique de Louvain*, *Rivista di Filosofia Neoscolastica*, *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie*, and *Gregorianum*. Here one can detect a new awareness of the positive achievements and the real problems supplied by all the recent movements in philosophy. Some articles are expository, some are critical from a traditional viewpoint, and some are frankly reconstructive within the new perspectives. To learn about what is going on among the more adventurous Catholic philosophers today, these journals must be consulted. The Catholic philosophical intelligence is starting to open forth in many fresh directions. At this transitional moment it is difficult to judge whether these explorations will yield some major *philosophical* fruits, but at least there is little relish for repeating that confusion between philosophical and theological disciplines which led to Modernism and its static counterpart.

At least a bare mention should be made of those particular trends in contemporary thought which have most deeply engaged the present generation of Catholic philosophers. Perhaps the oldest and most persistent attraction has been felt for phenomenology. It was during his Catholic period that Max Scheler wrote some of his most rewarding essays on the phenomenology of penance and prayer, neighbor-love and love for God. Although Scheler himself moved on to evolutionary pantheism, his writings have stimulated Catholics to apply descriptive techniques to the basic religious attitudes. There is considerable interest in the personality and work of Edith Stein, once an assistant of Husserl, then a Catholic nun, and finally a racial victim of Nazism.<sup>8</sup> After making a pointed comparison between Husserl and Aquinas, she went on to write two major phenomenological-metaphysical studies on the relation between finite and eternal being, as well as on the inner structure of the life of mysticism. At present, Catholic interest in phenomenology seems to be shifting toward

<sup>8</sup> Graef, H. C., *The Scholar and the Cross: The Life and Work of Edith Stein* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1955). A German edition and a French translation of Edith Stein's *Works* (especially *Kreuzestheorie* and *Endliches und ewiges Sein*) are being published by Nauwelaerts of Louvain, and English versions are in preparation.

the other end of the spectrum of experience. Instead of concentrating upon high metaphysical and mystical issues, the tendency is to analyze the acts forming the tissue of everyday life and to bring out their personal and objective strands of significance. This shift fits in with the emphasis in Husserl's later manuscripts, which are being edited from the Husserl Archives at Louvain University by H. Van Breda, O.F.M., as well as with the new researches being done by Merleau-Ponty and the practitioners of phenomenological psychiatry. The leading independent Catholic phenomenologist at Louvain is Alphonse De Waelhens, who is interested in the structure of psychology and the social sciences in relation to our world of familiar experience.<sup>9</sup>

Gabriel Marcel confounds many a priori definitions of existentialism by combining it with his Catholic faith. He is quite indifferent to labels and is willing to be called a Christian Socratic rather than an existentialist, if the latter is taken in the sense of Sartre's system. Like Socrates, Marcel fastens upon the concrete human individual and requires him to become reflective about his life and situation. Like Kierkegaard and Jaspers, he excels at the work of unmasking the various evasions whereby we try our best to exchange personal freedom for some favorite form of determinism. Marcel injects a fresh current into Catholic thought by concentrating more upon transitions than conclusions, more upon the pilgrim aspects of human life than safe arrivals into port.<sup>10</sup> A life kept open to others and kept receptive to God's personal initiative is what Marcel means by his master theme of fidelity to the demands of being. His is a spare and original form of existentialism which is not aimed at propagating a school of Marcelians but rather at encouraging other thinkers to find their own way of becoming rooted in being.

In France and Italy, the philosophy of the spirit is quite strong as a bond between Catholic philosophers and others who recognize the primacy of personal and spiritual values. Men like Régis Jolivet and M.-F. Sciacca agree with the friends of Buber on the need for building up the person-with-person sort of relations within the modern state. Their stress on a concrete, interior view of man and his search for God prolongs the abiding tradition of Augustine and Pascal, Rosmini and Newman. The philosophers of the spirit hug close to experience interpreted in a distinctively

<sup>9</sup> De Waelhens, A., *Existence et signification* (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1958). On Husserl and Scheler, see J. Q. Lauer, S.J., *The Triumph of Subjectivity* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1958). The two American Catholic journals which consistently include articles on current European philosophies are *Cross Currents* and *Philosophy Today*.

<sup>10</sup> G. Marcel's philosophy is unified in his Gifford Lectures, *The Mystery of Being*, vol. I: *Reflection and Mystery*, and vol. II: *Faith and Reality* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1950-51).

human and religious way, so that they prefer to proceed more through the concrete logic of personal description than through an impersonal method of demonstration.<sup>11</sup>

Within the English-speaking atmosphere of naturalism and scientific method, F. C. Copleston, S.J., has made an incisive criticism of logical positivism.<sup>12</sup> He has also opened the path for a constructive use of the techniques of analytic philosophy. He seeks to show that our world is fundamentally an open one and hence that metaphysics and the philosophical venture toward God are at least meaningful. In his book on *Insight*, B. Lonergan, S.J., aims at uniting the modern scientific outlook with theism. His analysis of scientific method leads to a view of the human intellect as essentially a dynamic inclination toward perfect knowledge and possession of God. He argues that our very commitment to a scientific civilization implies a more radical quest which only the vision and love of God can fully satisfy. Unfortunately, there have not been any important Catholic evaluations of American naturalism, which is still regarded in too extrinsic and negative a fashion. But for critical appreciation of the work of Marx and Soviet materialism, some good work has been done by Bochenski and Wetter. The former has also made extensive contributions to the theory and history of logic. And Catholic philosophy may soon grapple more positively with the implications of evolutionary thought in the wake of the synthesis proposed between evolutionism, personalism, and theism by the anthropologist and religious writer, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J.<sup>13</sup>

Viewed as a whole, then, Catholic philosophy today has considerable range and complexity. It is gradually coming into possession once more of its historical roots and it is reaching out tentatively for ways of evaluating, assimilating, and thus profiting from the works of modern intelligence. But this task cannot remain a sectarian affair, since it concerns the development of the human intelligence and requires the co-operation of others who are seeking a measure of human wisdom through philosophy.

<sup>11</sup> Consult, for instance, the French edition of M.-F. Sciacca, *L'Existence de Dieu*, translated by R. Jolivet and with a preface by Louis Lavelle (Paris: Aubier, 1951).

<sup>12</sup> Books by the men mentioned in this paragraph include: F. C. Copleston, S.J., *Contemporary Philosophy: Studies of Logical Positivism and Existentialism* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1956); B. J. Lonergan, S.J., *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1957); I. M. Bochenski, O.P., *Der sowjetrussische dialektische Materialismus* (Bern: Francke, 1950); *ibid.*, *Formale Logik* (Freiburg-Munich: Alber, 1956); G. A. Wetter, S.J., *Dialectical Materialism* (New York: Praeger, 1958); P. Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., *The Phenomenon of Man* (New York: Harper, 1959).

<sup>13</sup> There are two symposia by American Catholic thinkers for the Darwin centennial in: *The New Scholasticism*, vol. 33, October, 1959; *Thought*, vol. 34, Summer and Winter, 1959. A symposium on John Dewey's centenary will be published in 1960 by Fordham University Press.

## 4. Some Themes of Modern Papal Political Thought

THOMAS G. SANDERS

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION was the most catastrophic event for the Roman Catholic Church after the Reformation. Not only was a traditionally Catholic nation almost lost, but nonreligious and anti-Catholic forces were released with fury to help shape much of subsequent history. Unabashed secularism became a reality for the first time in Western culture.

The popes since the French Revolution have regarded themselves as spokesmen for a Church struggling fatefully against "Liberalism," a philosophy inimical to human existence and to God's beneficent plan for human salvation. In order to do justice to modern Catholic political and social thought, we must recognize this conflict with Continental Liberalism, whose most tragic and obvious symptoms were the tyranny and political chaos growing out of the French Revolution.<sup>1</sup>

The word Liberalism is intended to describe the philosophical views which originated in the Enlightenment and matured on the European Continent in the nineteenth century. Its important political principles may be indicated by contrasting them with the traditional Christian and humanistic views espoused by the Church, and with the pragmatic Anglo-Saxon tradition represented in the American Constitution. One would err in equating Continental Liberalism with the outlook of the founding fathers who impressed their views on the American Constitution.

(1) How does one know the truth? To this question Liberalism argued for reason alone against the classic Catholic synthesis of reason and revelation. Liberalism sought to uproot, with messianic zeal, antirational and reactionary forces of which the Church and its teachings seemed to be the prime examples. The American Constitution and tradition, on the other hand, say nothing on this issue. It is assumed that a stable society can be maintained with a diversity of approaches to truth.

<sup>1</sup> The most recent study of Roman Catholicism in the nineteenth century correctly recognizes the significance of the Revolution in determining Catholic behavior. Cf. Kenneth S. Latourette, *The Nineteenth Century in Europe: Background and the Roman Catholic Phase*, Harper & Brothers, 1958. I would suggest that the struggle with Liberalism is central. The right of revolution is an important emphasis of the Liberals.

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(2) Where does political sovereignty lie? Although traditionally receptive to diverse forms of government Catholic thinkers contended that authority was derived from God himself. Subjects must obey their rulers, and rulers must govern, not capriciously, but according to the standards of natural law, respecting meanwhile the rights of the Church to preach and minister. The Liberals, on the other hand, attacked the theistic foundations of government, contending that the source of law, authority, and the right to rule came only from the "general will" of the people. Changes in the general will, however sudden and arbitrary, led to changes in law and authority. The American Constitution is not as "Liberal" as is often assumed. The people determine authorities and legislators, but they must render obedience to their chosen officials even in instances of disagreement. Both governors and governed are restricted by the existent constitutional and civil law. Sudden shifts in the whims of the populace do not alter the fundamental necessity to obey chosen authorities and established laws. Divine sanction for authority is not affirmed, but it is not (as in Liberalism) denied.

(3) What is the relationship of society and state? Catholicism at its best has struggled against the tendency of modern national states to subordinate all social groups to the interests of the state. It has done this by emphasizing the prior rights of family, educational and economic institutions, and the Church. Liberalism, on the contrary, imbued with a nationalistic *mystique*, defined and limited the bounds of all other corporate entities, directing them according to the aims of the state. Goals and values other than national ones were regarded with suspicion. In the United States a plurality of groups and loyalties is assumed. The state is an instrument of society. The rights and interests of human associations possess a priority which the state cannot violate unless social order and national existence are threatened.

(4) What is liberty? Catholicism defines liberty in a twofold manner. First, it is the independence of the human will. Second, liberty is the knowing of truth and the doing of good. The latter is *real* freedom, the goal toward which man in his primal freedom should direct himself. In the words of Leo XIII, "liberty is a power perfecting man, and hence should have truth and goodness for its object."<sup>2</sup> Liberalism eliminated the latter aspect by defining liberty as the subjective and unlimited right to do what one wished. This tenet, of course, contradicted its emphasis on the

<sup>2</sup> Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei* (1885), in Etienne Gilson, *The Church Speaks to the Modern World*, Doubleday & Company, 1954, p. 175.

sovereignty of the general will. Liberalism was never able to solve the problem of whether the free individual will or the collective will was sovereign in society. The American legal tradition has never defined freedom in the Catholic objective sense; in theory it has leaned toward the Liberal concept. But it has assumed that though subjective freedom is a basic right, one cannot practice it beyond the bounds of established law, communal decency, and governmental stability.

These distinctions between the Liberal and the American outlooks become important when we recognize that the papacy, until the era of Pius XII, formulated its political thought with Liberalism, the enemy, in mind. The popes have never related their political conceptions to American democracy, but only to the "totalitarian democracy"<sup>3</sup> of Liberalism. Because of their polemical and anti-Liberal context the encyclicals contain historically contingent elements as well as permanent motifs of Catholic political thought. These two must be distinguished before their applicability to the United States can be determined. Furthermore, the struggle against Liberalism obscured for the popes the valid features of the Liberal criticism of the old order. The creative products of Liberalism have begun to be appreciated only during the pontificate of Pius XII.

The development of papal political thought may be divided into three periods: (1) from the French Revolution through the pontificate of Pius IX (1790-1878), (2) Leo XIII (1878-1903), (3) the twentieth century, especially Pius XII (1939-1958).

#### I. FROM THE FRENCH REVOLUTION THROUGH PIUS IX (1790-1878)

This period is characterized by vigorous condemnation of the tendencies of Liberalism and an uncritical support of the old order represented in the French monarchy. Its tone was set by Pius VI (1774-1799), who lucidly defined for his successors the tenets of Liberalism which the Church could not tolerate. No subsequent pope has added anything to his contrast between Catholic thought and Liberalism. In an allocution of March 29, 1790, and in *Quod Aliquantulum* (1791)<sup>4</sup> Pius condemned the French Revolution and its manifesto, the Declaration of the Rights of Man. Against "absolute liberty" which he described as "a monstrous right," Pius interposed rational liberty, man's indispensable instrument for determining right and wrong. Specifying freedom of religion, thought, speaking, writing,

<sup>3</sup> This helpful term is borrowed from J. L. Talmon, *The Rise of Totalitarian Democracy*, Beacon Press, 1952.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Georges Michon (ed.), *Les Documents Pontificaux sur la démocratie et la société moderne*, Paris: Rieder, 1928, pp. 31-38.

and printing, he lamented their separation from the objective obligations of truth and virtue for which these gifts had been given by God. He contended that the principal purposes of reason and freedom were to honor and know God, to serve him and his will, and to obey the lessons of life which had been taught by society and religion. Pius thus clearly drew a line between the Catholic and Liberal views of freedom, the former emphasizing the moral purpose of freedom, the latter its abstract and purposeless subjectivity. The ideological conflict lay between the priority of natural law or of natural rights, between freedom in a teleological framework or freedom as a human right apart from the question of its consequences.

The actions of the Revolutionary government toward the Church evoked further protest. Whereas Church and state in France had for centuries existed in harmonious, though by no means perfect, relationship, Pius now witnessed not simply separation as neutralization, but positive discrimination against Roman Catholicism. This seemed particularly incongruous in a society which he knew to be formally Catholic. How could the Church minister to the souls under its care when the political order dispossessed it of its traditional organizational and pastoral instruments? Pius realized with perspicuity that the Church was being subordinated to the national interests.

The Revolutionary government did not disguise its hostility to the traditional religion of France and its higher clergy who had collaborated in the social injustices of the past. Catholicism was disestablished, and non-Catholics admitted to positions previously denied them. If the government had gone only this far, France would have approximated the United States in its attitude toward the Church. But measures against the internal character of the Church were undertaken. Religious vows were no longer recognized, and members of religious orders were allowed to resign. Ecclesiastical possessions were appropriated by the nation, tithes were suppressed, ecclesiastical appointment of clergy was replaced by popular election, and the number of bishoprics and parishes was arbitrarily changed by the government. In a secret consistory on the occasion of Louis XVI's death Pius stated the case well when he not only criticized freedom of religion, but complained that of all religions only Catholicism had been persecuted and proscribed.<sup>5</sup>

Thus far the position of Pius VI involved elements that Roman Catholicism must by its nature uphold. It cannot accept a hostile naturalistic philosophy; and it cannot allow features integral to religious func-

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

tioning to be determined by the political authorities. But Pius went further. His only political answer to the new government was an affirmation of the virtues of the monarchy. To his credit one must recognize that in the late eighteenth century a republic was a rare phenomenon, and that more perceptive people than Pius VI, such as Edmund Burke, also looked with horror on the blood-stained revolutionary government which heedlessly overthrew the legal and institutional heritage of the past. We must nevertheless realize the weakness of Pius. Authority he rightly held to be necessary for society. But he conceived of authority in the person of the monarch, whom he described as the minister of God for the common good and the child of the Church, to serve her interests and defend her rights. He called the regime of Louis XVI "the best of all governments" and actively sought the intervention of other European nations to restore the French monarchy.<sup>6</sup>

When monarchy showed its vigor by reappearing in France several times during the next decades, the successors of Pius VI vigorously supported it against republicanism. Republican government in France continued its anti-Catholic motifs, and the popes felt justified in associating it with pernicious consequences like revolution and repression of the Church. These tendencies were ascribed to its false Liberal philosophy. Pius' successors, such as Gregory XVI (1831-1846), added only different language to his strategy for dealing with the hostile forces established in France and spreading throughout the Continent. Gregory undercut the attempt of Lammens and his associates in France and Belgium to reconcile Catholicism with Liberalism when he characterized liberty of conscience as "that absurd and erroneous opinion." He said that the future was not auspicious "for religion and for the governments from the course of those who desire that the Church should be separated from the state."<sup>7</sup>

In the *Syllabus of Errors* (1864) Pius IX summed up an era. Though it startled the world, the *Syllabus* only repeated Pius' own previous statements and those of his predecessors. The document defined errors; hence the positive position of the Church was only implicit. The political errors denounced mirrored clearly the ideology and absolutist pretensions of Liberalism. For ninety years its opposition to Liberalism had compelled the Church to counter intransigently what it understood of democratic government and separation of church and state by sanctioning the traditional monarchy and church-state union.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33, 42-48.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 69, 73.

## LEO XIII (1878-1903)

The greatness of Leo XIII has unfortunately been obscured in non-Catholic circles, the result of uncritical excision of his statements from their context. Leo was not a democrat, nor did he particularly like separation of church and state; but he successfully shifted Catholic political theory from the past to the present and genuinely sought to relate the Church to modern political society instead of simply denouncing it.

Leo's opposition to the Liberal views of freedom and authority was as uncompromising as that of Pius VI. In fact, the best statement of the Catholic view of responsible liberty may be found in his encyclical *Libertas* (1888).<sup>8</sup> Therein he indicated his acceptance of liberty of speech, press, and teaching, if these did not become "unbridled license" but were kept within "certain limits." One could not ask for a more commonsensical view.

Leo's attitude toward democracy was intimately bound up with his view of authority, which followed traditional patterns. He distinguished between the sanctity of authority *per se* and the contingent status of holders of authority. All society, he pointed out, required political authority. God has given rulers the right to rule, and subjects are obligated to obey; but the ruler himself is chosen according to the varied forms of particular societies. Leo insisted in several encyclical that Roman Catholicism held no doctrine concerning the form of government. Dissociating himself from the adulatory attitude of his predecessors toward monarchy, he said that "it is not wrong to prefer a democratic form of government."<sup>9</sup>

A democratic government must, nevertheless, uphold justice, seek the welfare of the individual subject and of society as a whole, and protect the rights of the Church. One should note that democracy has not been singled out alone for these admonitions, but they represent the Catholic standards for all political societies and may be easily traced to the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas. Leo found it necessary to attach them to his discussion of democracy because democracy as he knew it on the Continent, infected as it was with Liberalism, contravened these elemental criteria of good government. As a corollary of his view of authority he rejected the notion that the only sanction for authority lay with the masses who chose their governors, as well as a political absolutism which assumed that complete power is transmitted to the ruler by popular mandate. Both were associated with the Social Contract philosophy prevalent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

<sup>8</sup> Gilson, E., *op. cit.*, pp. 55-85.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

Leo's interpretation of the relationship between church and state is less simple than it seems to those critics of Catholic thought who delight in quoting his statement condemning "the fatal theory"<sup>10</sup> of church-state separation. His judgments were influenced by the unification of Italy in 1870 under an anticlerical regime, but particularly by a series of laws passed in France after 1880. These outlawed the Jesuits and other teaching orders, established secular education, legalized divorce, terminated religious holidays, and suppressed Catholic theological faculties. Hence it is no surprise to find that Leo defined separation as a situation in which "religious and political affairs ought to be altogether disunited"<sup>11</sup> and the laws of God expressed in justice and goodness overthrown. Such separation Leo categorically rejected. He refused to tolerate a government that treated the Church as if it did not exist, or which denied the Church control over its parishioners. He indicated that the root of such injustice lay in such an aggrandizement of the civil power that the Church was treated like any subsidiary organization of citizens.

Leo insisted that the Church was a *societas perfecta* established by God along with the state to guide and perfect man within history. In place of absolutism and monism he dusted off the ancient theory of Pope Gelasius I (492-496) with its description of this world in terms of two societies, each with its own integrity. Because both Church and state are concerned with the citizen, Leo insisted on harmony rather than separation. The prevalent hostility, which had replaced harmony, provoked Leo's attempt to normalize political and ecclesiastical relations. Separation in its Continental manifestations seemed to contradict drastically needed co-operation for human welfare.

Nevertheless, he accepted a form of separation. He called the adjustment of the Church with the modern system of government a "sound" opinion, as long as an equitable arrangement maintaining truth, justice, and religious rights could be worked out.<sup>12</sup> Examination of the context seems to indicate, however, that Leo regarded this as a concession to unfortunate circumstances, what later interpreters might have called a "hypothesis" in contrast with the more satisfactory "thesis" represented in closer church-state relations. When Leo praised the prosperity of the Catholic Church in the United States he commented that "she [the Church] would bring forth more abundant fruits if, in addition to liberty, she enjoyed the favor of the laws and the patronage of the public author-

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>11</sup> Leo XIII, *Humanum genus* (1884), *ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>12</sup> *Libertas*, *ibid.*, p. 80.

ity."<sup>13</sup> It is doubtful that Leo really examined the American church-state situation or its divergencies from the Continental republics in theory and practice. He simply accepted the American arrangement, interpreting it as a type of separation less vicious than the European brand.

His attitude has been often regarded as anti-American, but one might better recognize it as a remarkable adjustment by a great and realistic leader, who was able to extricate Catholic political theory from its centuries-long association with confessional states. One finds no evidence in Leo's position that he regarded the pre-Revolutionary political order as an ideal. One is impressed, on the other hand, with his conviction, obviously derived from the European experience of the nineteenth century, that the Church fared better under a harmonious association with the state than under the hostile Liberal republics. The changing circumstances of the twentieth century, and the emergence of Communism, whose doctrines bear a vivid resemblance to those of Liberalism, have revealed the prophetic character of the nineteenth-century papal message. But the success of Anglo-Saxon democracy as a fertile ground for Catholic expansion has indicated that the popes did not realize the democratic potential, developing in a form drastically different from the democracy they faced in Europe.

### III. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, ESPECIALLY PIUS XII

Contemporary Catholic political thought has been best stated by Pius XII. His immediate predecessor, Pius XI, effectively distinguished the traditional Catholic views from the new political absolutisms, Fascism, Nazism, and Communism, in *Non abbiamo bisogno* (1931), *Mit brennender Sorge* (1937), and *Divini Redemptoris* (1937), respectively. Pius XII went further, indicating the attitude of the Church on three topics: (1) the development of democratic government in modern states, (2) freedom of religion in modern states, (3) freedom of religion in proposed international political organizations.

Whereas Leo merely accepted democracy as a valid form of government, Pius XII positively affirmed its virtues. In his Christmas Message of 1944<sup>14</sup> Pius indicated that the tragedies which had resulted from unrestricted concentrations of political power were leading the people of the world to seek a system of government more consistent with their dignity and liberty. World War II might have been prevented if the people could have checked the rising dictatorships. The Catholic Church, he said, was

<sup>13</sup> Leo XIII, *Longinqua oceani* (1895), in John J. Wynne (ed.), *The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII*, New York: Benziger, 1903, p. 323.

<sup>14</sup> Pius XII, "Pope's Christmas Message, 1944," *The Catholic Mind*, XLIII (February, 1945), 65-77.

not concerned with external political structures, but with the individual person, for whom both government and Church share responsibility. Because modern man is called upon to make great sacrifices, he should have the right to express his own views on the duties required of him. Hence "the democratic form of government appears to many as a postulate of nature imposed by reason itself." Pius tempered this statement in a very realistic way by defining democracy according to the pattern of Leo XIII. After all, nearly all governments today claim to be democracies. Democracy, according to Pius, is not the disorderly rule of the masses; nor exact equality of culture, property, and authority. Rather, the democratic state must have power to command with real authority, and its governors must be judicious and capable.

In a true democracy both leaders and subordinates subject themselves to natural law and civil law. In this way both tyranny and popular caprice are avoided. More than any of his predecessors Pius associated natural law with the person. The Second World War showed him that violation of natural law by governments was synonymous with abuse of human rights such as life, family integrity, and religion. Democratic freedom must not be misused; in traditional fashion freedom means responsibility. The Church, Pius contended, was the foremost defender of freedom in this true sense.

Pius XII's criteria for judging a political system stand firmly within the Catholic tradition, namely, that any form of government may be accepted if natural law and authority are upheld. More than Leo, however, he recognized the value of a just democracy in preventing violation of the natural law through oppression of the populace.

Pius' view of freedom of religion is somewhat more difficult. He clearly dissociated Catholicism from any particular form of church-state relation by indicating that the often idealized Middle Ages, in which the political order was at times subordinate to papal power, was contingent. "This medieval conception was conditioned by the period. Those who know its source will probably admit that it would be even more astonishing had it not appeared."<sup>15</sup> Instead he said that the Gelasian dualism elaborated by Leo XIII represents the normative Catholic political view. But how are the political and religious authorities to be associated? Pius' statement deserves full quotation:

The historian should not forget that, if the Church and the State have known hours and years of conflict, there have been, from Constantine the Great

<sup>15</sup> Pius XII, "Church and History," *The Pope Speaks*, II (Autumn, 1955), 211.

up to the present time, and even in recent times, periods of calm, during which they have collaborated in full understanding in the education of the same persons. The Church does not conceal that in principle she considers this collaboration as normal, or that she regards as an ideal the unity of the people in the true religion and unanimity of action between herself and the State. She also knows, however, that for some time now events have been developing in rather the other sense; that is to say, toward the multiplicity of religious confessions and concepts of life in the same national community, where Catholics constitute a more or less strong minority. It may be interesting, and even surprising, for the historian to find in the United States of America one example among others of the way the Church succeeds in flourishing in the most varied conditions.<sup>16</sup>

"Collaboration" takes chief emphasis here. Though a society with a Catholic population in which Church and state agree is ideal, Pius did not indicate any particular legal or juridical form by which catholicization and collaboration could best be effectuated. Conceivably these wholesome conditions could be achieved without formal establishment of the Catholic Church and suppression of dissent, for Pius went on to indicate that the quality of relations between Church and state are not necessarily determined by the presence of a concordat. This statement, to be sure, is not fully satisfactory to those seeking an answer to the problem of religious minorities in Catholic societies or to the controversy among Catholic theologians about the relationship of the confessional state as "thesis" to modern forms of church-state separation. It seems that Pius was interested in the freedom and prosperity of the Church and not in juridical determination. The ideal for him was an abstraction: he accepted the contemporary trend toward religious pluralism and rejoiced in the providential condition of the Church in pluralistic countries.

The third area of political relevance dealt with by Pius was his examination of the role of Catholicism in a world community.<sup>17</sup> During and after the Second World War he often said that permanent peace required an international organization. In the circumstances of the modern world natural law would seem to indicate the need of international law and government. In such an international body, however, the basic tenets of Catholic political thought, natural law, and effective authority would be presumed.

A major problem would arise from the co-existence of "Catholic" and "non-Catholic" states in the international community. The solution en-

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. especially Pius XII, "International Community and Religious Tolerance," *The Pope Speaks*, I (first quarter, 1954), 64-71.

visioned by Pius was that each state would regulate its own religious and moral affairs, while throughout the larger society citizens could practice their own beliefs, as long as these did not contradict the penal laws of the state in which they were residing. In his discussion Pius distinguished the theological from the practical issue. The claim of Catholicism to be the only true religion is not properly a subject of discussion by political authority, but the practical issue concerns whether toleration is permissible. Inasmuch as God allows error and sin to prevail in the world, the supposition that "religious and moral error must always be impeded, when it is possible, is not valid *absolutely* and *unconditionally*." The duty to repress error is subordinated to higher norms such as the common good, and in the pluralistic world the common good would be undercut by a religious policy like that of the traditional Catholic state.

This statement by Pius is confusing. Was he speaking within the conservative type of political thinking that regards religious toleration as a hypothesis inferior to a thesis in which non-Catholic error is impeded where possible? Perhaps so. But it should also be noted that toleration, nearly always misunderstood by non-Catholics, represents within Catholicism a political art. That error has no right to exist and should be repressed is a theological matter. But throughout history error and immorality have always been tolerated, because in political determinations the common good demanded toleration. In a social context, to tolerate evil turns out to be the good, and not to tolerate it would be evil, or naïve, for no political society can ever institutionalize complete truth and goodness. Pius might simply have been stating the basic procedure of Catholic political thinking, to begin with the given circumstances and to make judgments for the common good. In paradise error would not exist, but in a pluralistic world it does. Hence the common good demands its toleration. Either interpretation has been espoused by contemporary Catholic thinkers.

Papal political thought since the French Revolution is consistent in opposing the assumptions of modern Liberalism and in defending Catholic views of liberty, law, authority, and the theological foundations of government. Nevertheless, it has come gradually to a new recognition of democracy and church-state separation. The most helpful contribution of the present or a future pope would be a clear statement of Catholic principles dealing on the one hand with ideological or totalitarian democracy, as represented in Jacobinism and Communism, and on the other hand with the pragmatic, nonphilosophical democracy of the Anglo-Saxon world.

## 5. The Burden of Our Separation

JAROSLAV PELIKAN

IF WE MEASURE the unity we have and the unity we seek, and if we find that we cannot go the way of conversion, then we must find a way to bear the burden of our separation. The time has come to speak a candid word about this burden, and a book like this would seem to be the right place to speak it. Because so many of the battle slogans on both sides have become clichés and so much of the defiance from both camps has become shrill, there are many people in both groups and outside them who really do not care any more. As we have seen, Roman Catholics maintain that by definition the church cannot be divided, and that therefore it has never been divided, even by the Reformation. Protestants maintain that the church was corrupted, and that the Reformation cleansed it. Thus they may forget about each other most of the time, and they can go on about their own ecclesiastical business as though the other half of the divided church did not exist or at least did not matter.

But in moments of sober reflection personally, and in times of severe crisis corporately, we remember our brethren in other parts of the church and we become aware of the separation, as the Protestants of Germany and their Roman Catholic brethren discovered one another during the Third Reich and became deeply conscious of their separation.<sup>1</sup> We may wish that the separation were not there. We may even hope that a day will come when Christendom will be reunited, with Orthodox, Protestant, and Roman Catholic in renewed fellowship with one another. But for our own lifetime at least, we must face the certainty that the separation is permanent. That indicates that we must learn to live in a divided church, to live in it, as the *Book of Common Prayer* says about marriage, "reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God." In the fear of God, then, of a God who is not mocked by our illusions, our pride, and our pretense,

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<sup>1</sup> Products of this discovery were books like Karl Adam, *One and Holy*, tr. Cecily Hastings (New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc., 1951), from the Roman side; and from the Protestant side books like Heinrich Hermelink, *Katholizismus und Protestantismus im Gespräch zwischen den Konfessionen um die Una Sancta* (Stuttgart, 1949).

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we must learn to bear the burden of our separation for ourselves as Protestants, and also to bear it for those many, whether Protestants or Roman Catholics, who do not see the burden or who refuse to bear it.

#### MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY

The burden of our separation means that Protestants and Roman Catholics have a mutual responsibility to and for each other.<sup>2</sup> Following as it does from our common membership in Christendom, this mutual responsibility requires that we extend our ecumenical perspective to include Roman Catholicism. The double standard of many Protestants is truly amazing on this score. While their ecumenicity has performed a service in enabling them to reach out to Protestants on the distant fringes of the Christian tradition, they still balk at the suggestion of some responsibility to Roman Catholicism. An interdenominational discussion may include spokesmen for Unitarianism and even for the Jewish faith, but the inclusion of a spokesman for Rome puts everyone on edge—including the spokesman for Rome. Although interdenominational schools and faculties of theology take pride in their inclusiveness and sometimes have Jewish theologians as professors, they usually do not include any Roman Catholics. These concrete instances illustrate how little responsibility most of us feel for our separated brethren, even though we do admit that despite their separation from us they remain our brethren.

It is really no answer to point out that our separated brethren do not regard us as brethren at all and that the only responsibility they sense for us is the responsibility to bring us back to Mother Church. As we have seen repeatedly, the Roman understanding of the church makes any other attitude difficult or impossible. According to that understanding of the church, Protestantism has left the true faith and the true church, and it must now be brought back. Acknowledging Protestantism as an equal in the ecumenical conversation is, from the Roman Catholic point of view, a denial of the truth and a disservice to Protestantism. Within the limits of this point of view, however, Roman Catholics are in some position to acknowledge a responsibility to and for Protestants. Although the prescriptions of *Humani generis* carefully circumscribe the expression of that responsibility, Roman Catholics do not regard Protestants as pagans to be evangelized but as erring Christians to be restored to the truth.<sup>3</sup> Rome

<sup>2</sup> E. Kristen Skydsgaard, *One in Christ*, tr. Axel C. Kildegaard (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), is, in my judgment, the most responsible effort by a Protestant theologian to include Rome in the ecumenical perspective.

<sup>3</sup> *Humani generis* in Henry Denzinger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, tr. Roy J. Deferrari, St. Louis: B. Herder Book Company, 1957, pp. 635-647 (an. 2305-2330).

thus recognizes a bond with Protestants that is more intimate than the mere bond of a common humanity. There is something that binds together all those who name the name of Christ, even though Rome cannot admit that they are all members of the church.<sup>4</sup> To this extent Rome, too, senses a responsibility for other Christians.

Despite this shortcoming in the sense of responsibility among Roman Catholics (or even because of it), Protestants who bear the burden of our separation must be even more deeply aware of their responsibility. If the church is to call itself "the body of Christ," it assumes the task of carrying on what Christ did—teaching and healing and praying and bearing burdens. The church does this when it becomes a place for Christians to strengthen and support one another in its worship and instruction and fellowship. The church does this, too, when the churches bear one another's burdens. In ecumenical contacts across denominational lines, this generation of Protestants has begun to learn this. Our common faith in a common Lord has helped us to examine the strengths and the weaknesses of our denominational differences, to learn from one another, and to bear the burden which this imposes upon us. But the common faith in a common Lord which we share with Roman Catholics has not succeeded in piercing the iron curtains erected by both sides. Even if the wall erected by one side were to fall, no one would notice, because the wall erected by the other side is as high and as thick as ever. Good fences do not always make good neighbors, and we do not bear one another's burdens. Yet the nature of our separation from Roman Catholicism requires us to do so, as does the constantly recurring need to discover our own identity as Protestants. Thus there is a burden on both sides, some motes and a few beams. Therefore, both sides have the duty of assuming responsibility to and for each other. Only in this way can the churches be, in Augustine's phrase, "the servants of all the servants of Christ."

#### GENTLE AND FIRM TESTIMONY

Bearing the burden of our separation means that we must bear gentle and firm testimony against each other's faults. The history of four centuries of mutual accusation and recrimination has given both of us ample opportunity to find such faults in the others and to reveal them in ourselves. During the first century and a half after the Reformation, discovering these faults was the way a young theologian on either side won his spurs; and a favorite exercise for the mature theologian was the composition of a new

<sup>4</sup> John M. Todd, *Catholicism and the Ecumenical Movement* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1956), makes a real effort to understand and appreciate Protestant theology.

treatise on the errors of Luther or of Trent, as the case may be. In many such treatises, needless to say, the arguments of the two sides passed each other without even touching. Not very many readers were convinced by them, and political allegiance influenced church membership far more than did confessional rhetoric. The theological polemics of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries undoubtedly offended against the virtue of charity more than once, though it must be added that Protestant theologians were as hard on other Protestant theologians as they were on Roman Catholics. With the rigidity of men who knew before they started just where their analysis would lead them, the defenders of the faith demolished their opponents without ever meeting them or their arguments. But as it was carried on by men like Martin Chemnitz and Johann Gerhard on the Protestant side or Robert Bellarmine on the Roman side, the polemical theology of these centuries did voice a testimony that was always firm and sometimes even gentle.

The modern world, including the modern church, finds polemical theology impolite, rather like eating peas with a knife. The usual civilized alternative to it is a tolerance which disposes of the burden of our separation by dropping it on the side of the road—a road on which, after all, “we are all traveling together to the same place.” Useful though this attitude of “live and let live” may be as a means of preserving domestic tranquility, it is really no solution. For the separation remains, and neither side can afford to be indifferent to the separation if it is to be faithful to its own position and history. By the very fact of its continual existence, each side is convinced that the other side has distorted the full meaning of the Christian gospel. If this is so, then there is no alternative to gentle and firm testimony. Protestantism is obliged to define itself with specific reference to Roman Catholicism. When Protestantism asserts and defends its right to exist, it must deal with the fact of our separation and with the question of its continuance. That means looking at the present state of Protestantism and examining current conditions in Roman Catholicism. To conclude from this that the day of Protestantism is over, as the converts have concluded, is to deal frivolously with the seriousness of our separation; and to conclude that mutual testimony is useless, as much of the leadership on both sides has concluded, is to negate the very grounds of our separation.

Gentle and firm testimony, then, is what we as Protestants owe to Roman Catholics, and also what Roman Catholics owe to us Protestants. If we refuse to read each other’s books or attend each other’s schools or meet for genuine discussion of the issues that separate us, how can there

be any testimony, gentle or firm or any other kind? As Chapter XIII suggests, we need to consider the creation of arenas where such testimony could be the regular order of the day. There are hindrances on both sides that would have to be overcome, but we must try to overcome them. The fear and the defensiveness that have characterized the attitudes on both sides often transform testimony into aggression, or they drive both sides back into their ghettos. Some of this is due to what we know about each other, some of it is due to what we do not know. Both Protestants and Roman Catholics need to be better informed about what is actually going on in the thought and the life of the other party. In some ways this may be better, and in other ways it may be worse, than we had imagined. The sermons delivered at Reformation festivals suggest that many Protestants are still battling the Inquisition and the Renaissance papacy, while the "Letters to the Editor" during the fight over the banning of the film *Martin Luther* on a television station in Chicago made it clear that many Roman Catholics still interpret the Reformation as the spawn of the devil. Perhaps books such as this one can help to clear the air—not in order to obscure our differences, but in order to clarify our real differences.

So long has it been since there was genuine testimony in either direction that representatives of both sides become tongue-tied when they do have the opportunity. It is far easier for groups of Roman Catholic bishops or of Protestant churchmen to pass resolutions in the safety of their own councils and thus to voice their testimony through the press rather than directly. Only by the intervention of some third party can the two sides really be brought face to face for the kind of testimony they both need to give and to receive. The theological alienation has been going on for so long that it would probably be necessary for a philosopher to stand between two theologians and translate the one to the other—if we could find a philosopher who understands both theologians. Historians and social scientists need to point out to both sides how many of their differences are related to trends in society as well as to issues in the interpretation of the faith. Providing the setting for such conversation and confrontation is a primary need in the life of the churches today, and all the more so when the churches do not recognize the need. For in no other way can we live up to the moral obligations imposed upon us by our separation.

#### HONEST SELF-EXAMINATION

The obverse side of such gentle and firm testimony is a program of honest self-examination. The only way to rescue the churches of the Ref-

ormation from the very thing against which the Reformation protested is for each generation to regard the Reformation as an unfinished task and a new opportunity. Over and over again the dynamic of what Paul Tillich calls "the Protestant principle" must be applied to the forms of theology and church life that have come out of Protestantism. In Tillich's own words:

The central principle of Protestantism is the doctrine of justification by grace alone, which means that no individual and no human group can claim a divine dignity for its moral achievements, for its sacramental power, for its sanctity, or for its doctrine. If, consciously or unconsciously, they make such a claim, Protestantism requires that they be challenged by the prophetic protest, which gives God alone absoluteness and sanctity and denies every claim of human pride. This protest against itself on the basis of an experience of God's majesty constitutes the Protestant principle.<sup>5</sup>

Protestantism stops being Protestant when it forgets to address to itself the same prophetic criticism which it is so willing to address to Roman Catholicism. Throughout the career of Luther we can hear this call to self-examination and self-criticism. He was almost ruthless in the honesty of his self-examination. His personal piety, his theological formulas, the quality of Protestant preaching, the church life and devotion of the evangelical churches, the increasing political involvement of his Reformation—these and other central questions never ceased to trouble him, and he never stopped wondering whether the Reformation had not been a mistake. Out of such wondering came his certainty that despite all its weaknesses the Reformation had indeed been God's work. This did not make him smug about its achievements or blind to its failures. When the reformers speak about justification by faith, they are applying this to the church as well as to the individual. The church, too, is "righteous and sinful at the same time." This Reformation insight, upon which we drew in Chapter XII, makes honesty and candor in self-examination a necessary corollary of the church's proclamation; and the sermons of Calvin in Geneva are sufficient evidence that such honesty and candor can be altogether compatible with the conviction that one's theological position is the correct one.

Nevertheless, the conviction that one's theological position is the correct one can become so overwhelming in the life of a Protestant church that it no longer examines itself but examines only its members to see whether they conform to the standards of its arbitrary orthodoxy. Hence honest self-examination cannot be taken for granted in a church simply because it teaches justification by faith or traces its lineage to the Reformation.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Tillich, *The Protestant Era*, University of Chicago Press, 1948, p. 226.

tion. Repeatedly in Protestant history the churches have forgotten the meaning of justification and have become self-satisfied in their wealth or their political power or their orthodoxy or their moralism. So it has been necessary again and again for the Protestant principle of self-criticism to assert itself against this self-satisfaction and to issue a call to repentance. Just how much of this self-criticism there has been in Protestant history is only now becoming evident. Studies by Arnold Schleiff and other scholars are unearthing the continuing barrage of criticism directed at the church by the church during the period of Protestant orthodoxy and since.<sup>6</sup> The power of the Protestant principle refuses to be submerged in the life of the Protestant churches.

In the Roman church, the situation is different and more difficult, partly because anyone who issues a call to self-examination runs the danger of sounding like a Protestant. Yet the liturgical movement discussed in Chapter XI, and the current preoccupation of many Roman Catholic scholars with the Bible, discussed in Chapter XII, are both instances of such self-examination. There are also many among both theologians and parish priests who are intensely critical of the *status quo*. Books like Father Ong's *Frontiers in American Catholicism* or Monsignor Ellis' *American Catholics and the Intellectual Life* speak with a ringing candor about the shortcomings of the church's performance in the United States.<sup>7</sup> In *Commonweal* and other publications the articulate laity of the church adds its note of critical self-examination. Although all of these men, clerical and lay, must be extremely cautious about the form of their criticism and although they may run a certain risk in voicing it, I think it is fair to say that there is no valid criticism of Roman Catholicism from Protestant ranks that has not found an echo somewhere within Rome. Much of the criticism is ignored or even stifled, but it goes on. A Protestant churchman can only pray, "May their tribe increase!" and meanwhile see to it that our own church life and our own theology are ever open both to the critique that comes from Roman Catholicism and to the self-examination which is the peculiar vocation of the Protestant theologian.

#### ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS AND DEBTS

When honest self-examination goes beyond a summary of the contemporary condition of the church to a thorough audit of its accounts, it

<sup>6</sup> Arnold Schleiff, *Die Selbstkritik der lutherischen Kirchen im 17. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 1937. There is an interesting collection of such materials in Ernest Zedden, *The Legacy of Luther*, London, 1954.

<sup>7</sup> Walter J. Ong, *Frontiers in American Catholicism*, The Macmillan Company, 1957; John Tracy Ellis, *American Catholics and the Intellectual Life*, Chicago: Heritage Foundation, Inc., 1956.

comes to an assessment of our mutual needs and of our mutual debts. Implied in an honest self-examination is the obligation that we honestly face up to what we have all lost through the division of the church and to what we have received from the other half of the divided church. This is not easy for anyone to do, and initially at least we might have to do it in private. For such an assessment asks that the church institute a system of bookkeeping to which neither Protestantism nor Roman Catholicism is accustomed. Not only must the liabilities be listed in detail, but the assets must also be labeled "accounts payable."

We have lost something through our separation, all of us have. Neither Protestantism nor Roman Catholicism has as direct an access to the fullness of the Christian tradition as it should have, and neither is as free to possess the completeness of Christ. The prophetic and priestly belong together, and either is truncated without the other. Yet they have been in proper balance only seldom. The extremes represented by Jeremiah and by the priestly code in the Old Testament have had their counterpart in Christian history, and since the Reformation it has been possible for these two extremes to claim that they are represented by the two divisions of Western Christendom. Bearing the burden of our separation means admitting that this is so. As Jeremiah needed the very system of priests and cult against which he protested, so Protestantism has needed the catholic substance against whose idolatry it warns. As the cultic system of the Old Testament needed the prophets to save it from itself, so Roman Catholicism needs to hear the prophetic voice of its separated brethren. This means that on both sides we must seek to incorporate into our own church life as much of the total Christian tradition as we can. It means that Protestants must look for ways to strengthen and to articulate their catholicity, as we shall point out in Chapter XVI, and that Roman Catholics must discover means of becoming more evangelical. This has become infinitely more difficult for both sides because of our separation, and we do not bear the burden of our separation unless we face our mutual needs.

Matching our mutual needs are our mutual debts. We are what we are as Protestants partly because of what we have inherited from our Catholic past. Modern Roman Catholicism owes a greater debt of gratitude to the reformers than it has ever been willing to acknowledge. To summarize what we have said in Chapters IV and XIII, we Protestants must discover what made the Reformation possible, while Roman Catholics must discover what made the Reformation necessary. For too long, Protestant theologians and historians have treated Luther and Calvin as creations out

of nothing or as "sports" in the Darwinian sense of the word, who had no real continuity with preceding generations. What is more, they have often gloried in this. At a congress of Reformation scholars in Denmark I heard an eminent European authority on Reformation theology declare that "only that is genuine in Luther which is different from the tradition that produced him." Yet the research of that very scholar and of many others substantiate what a mature doctrine of the church would also oblige us to say: that in their reformatory work Luther and Calvin were administering the heritage of the church and acting in the name of the church—not merely the church of the first century, but the church of all the centuries. That is why Chapter IV could speak of "the catholicity of the reformers."

Rome, on the other hand, needs to measure the extent of its debt to the Reformation and to Protestantism since the Reformation. Indeed, Roman Catholicism is at its positive best when it is confronted by Protestantism. Without making invidious comparisons, it is possible to say that Roman Catholicism has succeeded in finding such maturity within German and French culture at least partly because of the theological vigor in the Protestantism it has confronted there. The intellectual leaders of the American church look wistfully at the church in France, and they have a chance to achieve some of the same power here because of the presence of a Protestantism that is acquiring an ever-deeper theological consciousness. The Roman church thus owes more to Protestantism than either might be able to see. That debt goes all the way back to the Reformation. As children of the church, the reformers spoke out against what threatened the church. Its initial reaction was to excommunicate them, but in subsequent decades it went on to correct many of the abuses to which they had pointed. The program did not go far enough; and many of the revisions were not improvements at all, as the decrees of the Council of Trent make painfully evident. But revisions there were, and these have strengthened and purified the Roman church. For these and for some of its continued health it is indebted to Protestantism; and someday it will have to acknowledge this more openly than it has, and open itself to the witness of the Reformation. Thus both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism have several needs to recognize and several debts to pay if they are truly to bear the burden of our separation.

#### CONCERN FOR THE TOTAL CHURCH

If Protestants and Roman Catholics ever recognized their mutual needs and their mutual debts, they might develop a concern for the total church and an awareness of the consequences of their actions for the total

church of Christ. When Protestant churchmen and spokesmen persist in making Protestantism merely the negation of Roman Catholicism, they are threatening the foundations of Protestantism. It is often easier for a Protestant to take the voice of secularism seriously than it is for him to hear the witness of his Roman neighbor. Protestants and secularists band together in an opposition to Rome that is sometimes hypersensitive to the point of condemning a crèche on the high-school lawn as "sectarian." In the days following the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia, some leaders of the Protestant churches were beguiled into believing that Communism opposed the Roman church merely because of its wealth and power, and that therefore the Marxist state was actually supporting the Protestant cause by its attacks upon the hierarchy. There was just enough justice in these attacks to make the case plausible. Since then it has become clear that an attack upon Roman Catholicism may be an attack upon Christianity itself. When Protestants join in the chase merely because someone is beating the antipapal drum, they may discover that the mob will turn on them next.

On the other hand, when the myopia of some Roman Catholics causes them to act as though the Christian cause and the Roman cause were always identical, the whole cause of Christ suffers, including the Roman cause. The political maneuvers of Roman Catholic leaders here and abroad harm not only them and their church, but Protestants and their churches and the church of Jesus Christ as a whole. Writers in *Commonweal* and other periodicals may disown the tactics of the late Cardinal Segura, for whom even Franco was not restrictive enough in his measures against Protestantism. But the voices that are raised against such maneuvers are usually thinner than the voices of the prelates who engage in the maneuvers. Although some Protestants take a certain pleasure in observing the embarrassment of Roman Catholics in America at these maneuvers, the real calamity lies in their evil consequences for Christians everywhere. As the New Testament says, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles" (Rom. 2:24) because of what some members of the church do. Each side has managed to do a great deal of damage to the other side as well as to itself by these tactics, and Christendom is poorer as a result. When Protestants surrender the gospel to some modern idea; or when Roman Catholics, supposedly in the name of the gospel, oppose some modern idea merely because it is modern—then the whole body of Christ suffers. To bear the burden of our separation, both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism will have to have a greater concern for the total church.

Although they were not written to a divided church, but to a confused church, the words of Paul's letter to the Galatians have a peculiar relevance to both parts of our divided church as we carry the burden of our separation:

Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if any one thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each man will have to bear his own load. Let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches. Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. (6:1-7.)

### "Catholicism in its Actuality"

The Spirit of Pentecost must always and will always awaken new life. Ever and anon it will touch the depths of the Church's soul and set free mighty impulses and stirring movements. But so that these movements may not come to nothing, but may be permanently fruitful, they must be guided by Church authority by means of rules and laws, fixed ordinances and regulations. So personal piety requires that the Church regulate it, and define it, and give it a strict form, if it is not to ebb uselessly away. But on the other hand the form needs the flow of life and experience if it is not little by little to become rigid and crusted over. It needs it the more, the older and more venerable it is. In the right co-ordination of these two factors lies the secret of the Church's vigorous life. . . .

Well may the Catholic soul exclaim with Peter Lippert: "O Catholic Church, thou angel of the Lord, thou Raphael sent to guide us in our pilgrimage, mayest thou ever find the strength to walk with such mighty strides that thou thyself mayest be able to shatter the forms that have grown stiff and antiquated. Catholic Church, angel of the Lord, mayest thou ever find strength so to stir thy wings as to raise a mighty wind and blow away the dust of centuries."

—Karl Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism*. Transl. by Dom Justin McCann, O.S.B. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935, pp. 256-257. Used by permission.

## 6. The Significance of the Liturgical Movement

J. V. LANGMEAD CASSERLEY

IN ANSWER to the question, "What great movements of the Holy Spirit are most manifestly sweeping Christendom at the present time?" most informed American Protestants would probably mention first of all the Ecumenical Movement; but if pressed to instance a second current of thought and devotion agitating and energizing contemporary Christendom, the answer could only be the Liturgical Movement. The Liturgical Movement is, of course, primarily a great surge of reform and renewal in the Roman Communion, but it has had at the same time considerable influence on non-Roman Catholic bodies; perhaps more particularly on the Anglican Communion, to which the present writer belongs, but also on many Lutherans and members of Reformed churches.

At first sight the liturgical movement appears to be animated by a primarily historical, indeed almost archeological, temper of mind. It seems to be an effort to look back beyond medieval worship and its end product, the characteristic cults of the Reformed churches, in an effort to recover something of the riches and values of the worship of the early church. Of course, there can be no doubt that the liturgical movement has encouraged a renewed investigation of the forms and usages of patristic worship and that this process has had many good results; but it would be a great mistake to suppose that the liturgical movement is simply concerned with the rites and ceremonies of the worshiping church. On the contrary in its most important aspects it is primarily a movement for the reformation of the whole life of the Church; it is at once a theological movement, a biblical revival, and a prophetic outburst. In this article we will discuss its significance under each of these three headings in turn.

### I. THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT AS A THEOLOGICAL MOVEMENT

At the heart of the liturgical movement is a rediscovery of the theological significance of liturgy. In the Protestant world especially, liturgical worship has come to mean that kind of worship which employs set verbal

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forms authoritatively prescribed by some kind of official Prayer Book. The role of the various kindred Books of Common Prayer in the churches of the Anglican Communion is a very good example of what most people have come to mean by liturgical worship. At the opposite extreme to this are the free, extemporary forms of worship favored by so many Protestant bodies. But the presence of an officially prescribed rite, although there are many good reasons for regarding it as desirable, is not the *sine qua non* of liturgy.

Liturgy is essentially a pattern of action rather than a form of words. No doubt in the history of the Church the prescribed liturgical pattern of action tends to beget a prescribed interpretative pattern of words, of extraordinary literary beauty and of a religious depth comparable almost to Scripture itself, and those who love liturgy will certainly treasure these liturgical literary patterns. But the essence of liturgy is not words but actions. Liturgy is essentially something done, not something said. In the performance of the liturgy in the midst of the Church the faithful collaborate together in the solemn enactment of patterns of action which not merely recall or resemble, but are mystically at one with, that Divine pattern of action in and through which the Living God has brought about the redemption of the world.

From this point of view the primary function of the liturgy in the Church is to immerse the worshiper in the biblical context, to set him face to face with the mighty acts of God, the Creator and Redeemer. Thus, for example, the Sacraments are to us in the living contemporary Church what the miracles, like those of healing and feeding, were to the little flock that surrounded the Incarnate Lord. Thus it is in and through the sacramental events of the liturgy that the contemporary Christian actively experiences the power of the Resurrection, the reality of the Cross, and the transfiguration of all human nature in the Incarnation.

All this conjures up in our minds the whole biblical theology of the living God. The Church of the Living God who acts into history from eternity is fittingly and inevitably a Living Church which acts out of history into eternity. Any idea of worship as primarily some kind of corporate contemplation or meditation—though, of course, these things do have their valued place in the spiritual life—has missed the basic characteristic of liturgy. Liturgical worship is a solemn act of that living Church which walks humbly in the presence of the living God.

From this point of view liturgy stands revealed as a theological concept of primary rank and it becomes possible even to speak of Divine acts

like creation and redemption as, so to speak, celestial liturgies, indeed the primordial liturgy which all human liturgy in the Church echoes and re-echoes, so that the life of the living Church is one with the life of the Living God.

I have contrasted this with notions of worship which interpret it primarily in terms of corporate contemplation and meditation, the kind of worship which brings together a seated laity and an active ministry—listening to the reading of Scripture, hearing a sermon preached, reading in some book of devotion while the priest mutters the Mass at a distant altar. In all these very different types of spiritual exercise we find brought together a relatively passive laity and a relatively active ministry. True liturgy, however, is an act of the whole Church in which the role of the laity is as essential as the role of the ordained priesthood, so that it is in the performance of the liturgy that the solemn truth underlying the doctrine of the priesthood of the laity finds its perfect fulfillment and its supreme expression. In the absence of any strong liturgical tradition the principle of the priesthood of the laity, however vehemently proclaimed, turns inevitably into the opposite and contradictory principle of the laicity of the priesthood, and the whole life of the Church is correspondingly impoverished. Already we can begin to see the way in which the zealous proclamation of the principles of the liturgical movement will tend completely to reform the Church's life, to bring about a new orientation of the laity and a new release of energy throughout the whole body of Christ.

On the other hand there are signs that in many places, particularly where the liturgical movement exercises a kind of secondhand influence outside the Roman Communion, where these profounder insights may easily be lost from sight, the liturgical movement tends to degenerate into a merely ceremonial one, with much excitement about things like the westward position, the revival of the offertory procession, the substitution of paenulas for the less generously cut Counter-Reformation chasubles, and so on. This is perhaps particularly the danger at the present moment in the Episcopal Church. One American bishop has even gone so far as to issue his own *Customary* in an attempt to direct worship throughout his diocese along what he sincerely believes to be liturgical movement lines. This has involved him in actually recommending the adoption of ceremonial practices which violate the rubrics of the *Book of Common Prayer*. For example, there may be some argument as to precisely what the *Book of Common Prayer* means by the words "standing *before* the altar" but it cannot reasonably be held that what the rubric really means is "standing

*behind* the altar." No doubt many of these ceremonial ideas are good ones, but it would be a pity indeed if in the midst of controversy about minutiae of this kind the basic theological idea which underlies the whole liturgical movement were to be forgotten.

As I have already said, this basic idea is the biblical idea of the Living God and of that living Church which finds its new life in and through sacramental participation in the Divine action. The biblical revival has familiarized us with the danger of merely static notions of the Divine Being, which is passively contemplated by the faithful in their prayers and in their worship. What we have sometimes failed to notice is that the mere contemplation of the *idea* of the Living God can be just as passive as the mere contemplation of the *idea* of a static God, and in fact post-Reformation worship in Protestantism, like a great deal of conventional post-Counter-Reformation worship in Catholicism, has committed just this error. No Christian ever really believes in a static God—to tilt against that idol is to tilt against a man of straw; but what we have done is to substitute for a real participation in the *action* of the Living God, a passive contemplation of the *idea* of the Living God. To put it briefly, the idea of the Living God demands the corresponding and reciprocal idea of the living liturgical Church before it can incarnate itself in our actual practice of Christianity.

## II. THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT AS A BIBLICAL REVIVAL

All that we have said already makes it clear that the fundamental theological idea behind the liturgical movement is a return to the basic idea of Holy Scripture. God is a God who acts, who energizes the created and redeemed Church to a redeemed and created life lived upon and within the infusion of his own divine vitalities. In contemporary Romanism this connection between the liturgical revival and the biblical revival is very obvious. Indeed some centers of the liturgical revival, like the monastery at Beuron in South Germany, are also centers of biblical scholarship in which Protestant and Catholic scholars take part side by side.

The connection between Bible and liturgy is really quite obvious. The Judaism with which Jesus and the first Christians were familiar was in its own way a liturgical Judaism, and indeed, the Hebrew liturgies of the temple and the synagogues have left their mark on the form and structure of Christian liturgy. But there is more than that at stake. The proper context of Holy Scripture is the liturgy. Not only is liturgy scriptural, it is also true that Scripture is liturgical. One of the great virtues of the Anglican books of Common Prayer is the extent to which they have grasped

and exploited this principle. Almost all the characteristic services in the *Book of Common Prayer* make a rich liturgical use of Scripture.

In these days enlightened and educated Christians have so completely embraced the historical method, so entirely accepted the so-called critical way of discovering, interpreting, and expounding biblical truth, that we have come to look upon the way in which the scholarly biblical Christian handles the Scriptures as the principle and normative, indeed almost the only, way of treating Scripture. Indeed, we have almost come to interpret the obvious truth that Christianity is the great historical faith as though it meant in practice that Christianity is the historian's faith, so that history as the historian lays it bare by the use of his proper technical methods must become regulative of our faith and practice.

It seems to me that this is a very dangerous ambiguity, indeed a *non sequitur*. Of course, the biblical appeal is in a very real sense an appeal to history, but not so much to all or any history, rather to the act of the Living God in the midst of history. Certainly the biblical appeal is not to history as rediscovered, recorded, and related by the historian, but to history as we find it in the Bible interpreted by the prophets. But prophetic history is not pure historiography in the modern sense, rather it is a kind of meeting and mating between the spirit of the historian and the spirit of the theologian. The historian who is nothing of a theologian and the theologian who is nothing of a historian may both display many virtues, but neither will ever become a prophet.

It is this insight, perhaps latent more often than explicit in the liturgical movement, which most of all promises to lead us toward a new biblical theology which is not so much a reaction against as an advance beyond biblical criticism. So much that passes for biblical theology, particularly in neo-orthodox Protestantism, really neglects Scripture and fastens rather upon the presuppositions and implications of the whole biblical outlook. What we urgently need is a prophetic rather than a merely historical interpretation of the content of Scripture itself, and this may best come about through a renewed vision of the biblical documents which regards them not as primarily an interesting collection of historical and literary remains, but as primarily the living book of the living, active, liturgical people of God.

### III. THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT AS A PROPHETIC OUTBURST

The Church is supremely and most manifestly the Church in the solemn enactment of the liturgy. It is there that she most fully realizes and displays the depths of her interior life in Christ. In the liturgy our prayer

is the earthly counterpart of his eternal prayer, and it is through the baptismal and eucharistic liturgies that mortal men are made members of his risen Body. If the liturgy is the solemn act of the Church in Christ, it is even more significantly the act of Christ in his Church. The contrast which this way of thinking about the liturgy thrusts upon our notice is that between the Church as we see her to be in the obedient celebration of the liturgy and the Church as we know her to be at other times, when she is caught up into the order of time and history rather than into that of liturgy and eternity. Our lives we may say are unworthy of the liturgy, and here we have the basis for a passionate prophetic protest against the mediocrity and corruption of our worldliness, so that we can experience our unworthy selves as indeed caught up into the liturgy, but present there only as a kind of abomination of desolation standing where it ought not. Those who talk about "the failure of the Church" are apt to have so inflated a conception of themselves and their own claims that they imagine that the Church of Christ has failed men. Those, on the other hand, who have a more exalted conception of the Church which reveals itself to us in the liturgy will be more apt to think in terms of the failure of the churchmen, i.e., the failure of themselves, a far more biblical point of view. This is always the essence of biblical prophecy—the unmasking of our failure to be and become, to make manifest, what we really are.

But there is more to be said than this. The liturgy is the true, the only absolutely valid form of community. We know very little about the Kingdom of God, for the eye has not seen and the ear has not heard it, neither has it entered into the human heart; yet of this we may be sure, the Kingdom of God will be much more like the liturgy, which indeed anticipates and participates in the Kingdom, than like anything else we know on earth. This is perhaps supremely the message of the Book of Revelation. Thus the contrast between the kind of community we experience in the liturgy and the kind of community in which we find ourselves on all other occasions is again one which gives birth to radical and prophetic social criticism. If the liturgy is right then indeed everything else is wrong—the political forms, the economic structures, the social patterns—and God has so created the world that these defective and invalid patterns of community will never be able to achieve abiding stability or to protect themselves against corruption and decay.

It is certainly true that the liturgical movement has deeply impressed many of those in European Roman Catholicism who have adopted extreme and radical political positions. Yet we can trace the influence of the liturgi-

cal movement not merely in phenomena of this kind but at a profounder level. The prophetic consequence of the liturgical movement is not only a protest against selfish individualism, it also prompts an equally emphatic protest against all forms of communalism which engulf, destroy, or diminish the person. The claims of violent and invalid forms of community upon the individual are in many cases even worse and more soul-destroying than individualism itself. This is clear enough in the case of totalitarian social movements like Fascism and Communism, but we can also trace the same kind of pattern in phenomena more characteristic of our own culture, such as the tremendous pressures toward conformity of a monotonously middle-class society, and some aspects at least of the various group psychological movements so characteristic of our time.

At this point there seems to be a close link between the spirit of the liturgical movement and the philosophy of the French existential thinker, Gabriel Marcel. If it is obvious that the liturgical community is in no sense a merely heterogeneous crowd of self-sufficient, self-regarding individuals, it is certainly on the other hand a community of persons, in the truest sense of the word—a catholic community, transcending all class uniformities and racial distinctions. It is a community which binds itself to conform to the will and grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ, that will and grace of God which makes each one of us free with a kind of creaturely participation in the freedom of God which is in fact the only true freedom there is. In the liturgical community we conform to this will of God and to nothing else beside it. In the phrase of Gabriel Marcel, the highest form of existence is to be found in the proclamation, "*we are*"; *we are* in our freedom, individuality, personality before God, and this is enough to make it a community in the fullest sense of the word.

The liturgical community is not in the ordinary sense of the word a group, it is not like a number of people sitting opposite each other around a table and very much taken up with each other. The link that binds together the members of the liturgical community is their common orientation toward God made manifest in Christ. It is, in fact, more like the kind of community which we find at the theater, or at the athletic display, the community of people all interested in some reality which transcends them rather than merely in each other. It is perhaps important to emphasize that the liturgical community is not merely the fellowship of those who are celebrating the liturgy in one particular place. On the contrary the links of the liturgical community bind us to people we shall never know in the ordinary sense of the word, living perhaps on the other side of the world,

or in some other generation than our own. The liturgical community transcends time and space and certainly mocks at the impotence of neighborhood. It is certainly not, we must say, the kind of reality which can be analyzed and understood either by psychology or sociology. It is too concrete a reality to be interpreted by such abstractions.

The genuinely prophetic protest is always a protest against what we are rather than a protest against what other people are doing. This is the danger latent in the prevalent anti-communist complex of so many Christian people at the present time. The fierce opposition to communism is historically understandable, politically inevitable, and ethically justified. Yet the danger is that we shall be blinded by it to the defects and corruptions nearer home. Perhaps the profoundest evil in communism is the evil of the classless society—not of course the evil of having created it, for it cannot be created, but rather terrible evils involved in trying to impose it. The victory of any one monolithic class in the class struggle can only issue in the totalitarian subjection of all the people to this one victorious instance of the class spirit. A merely secular equality is the arch-enemy of both secular and spiritual liberty. We must ask ourselves whether an all-pervading middle-classness is either very much better or very much worse than an all-pervading proletarian classness. A different class may be doing it, but what is being done comes in either case to very much the same sort of thing. Prophetic criticism, in other words, is always and inevitably self-criticism, and it will never make the mistake of supposing that because other people look like devils we must be angels. The word of the Lord given in the liturgy is thus always and everywhere a word of judgment. It is, of course, also a word of mercy, but mercy is only possible after judgment has been declared and humbly accepted.

Thus it is characteristic of the liturgical movement, which seems to begin with a spate of history and archeology about the characteristics of worship in the early Church, that it culminates in radical prophecy. This is only another way of indicating how profoundly biblical the liturgical movement is. In the Bible it is always true that the Word of the Lord is only given in relation to the event, and so it is that in the life of the Church since the Resurrection and the Atonement the proper context for the proclamation of the living Word of God is provided by the majestic recurrence of the liturgical event. Preaching itself is liturgical; not in the sense of being an adequate substitute for liturgy; rather it is the inevitable consequence of liturgy, a word within and out of the liturgy in which liturgy reveals its consciousness of its own meaning. We gather

together in the liturgy that God may make bare his holy arm and do a deed among us like unto the deeds which he did in the midst of our fathers. And when the Lord God has thus acted and spoken, what can we do but prophesy?

#### IV. CONCLUSION

I have tried in this brief survey to indicate broadly the whole spirit and implications of the contemporary liturgical movement. Yet I seem to have omitted one thing and that perhaps the most important of all—the influence of the liturgical movement on personal holiness. Of this one can say little more than that it has undoubtedly been profoundly real. The liturgical movement encourages, perhaps even imposes, a new kind of spirituality. If liturgical prayer is the highest form of prayer, and what we may call the mysticism of the liturgy the supreme form of spirituality, then we must say that the traditional techniques of Christian spirituality, however great their virtues and merits, are indeed defective and lacking in something absolutely essential. This is just as true if we look at traditional Protestant spirituality as if we cast our eyes on the noble and intense spirituality of the Roman Church since the Counter-Reformation. Both of them we may say have tended to leave the liturgy out of account. Too great a stress on the necessity of what was called personal religion blinded men to the importance of that common spirituality which we can find only together, only in the Church and in Christ. Christ is, in fact, the substance of the Church and in principle the reunion of mankind. It is the spirituality which feeds upon that substance and inherits that unity which will prove not in time but in eternity the characteristic spirituality of the Kingdom of God, where redeemed and transfigured souls "rest not day or night, singing holy, holy, holy . . ."

## 7. Reformation and Roman Christians in Dialogue

SAMUEL J. WYLIE

IN RECENT YEARS a steady stream of reports from Europe has come to this country about gratifying dialogue between Protestant and Roman Catholic theologians, acts of trust and charity hitherto considered inconceivable, and confidence in each other's scholarship which makes consultation reasonable and collaboration likely. In the past few months the first evidence of a like movement has begun to appear in the United States. It may be valuable to review the encouraging signs and to attempt to explain them in terms of contemporary trends in theology and world affairs.

### I

French and German clergy are quick to admire Protestant virtues and to regain them for Catholic devotion. Charles Moeller, a professor at Louvain, in an article on the Roman Catholic point of view in ecumenical encounters lists several direct benefits to the Roman Catholic Church from her conversations with Protestants. He cites "mutual information" as the first happy result. American Protestants will be shocked to learn that it has taken four hundred years for Roman Catholic scholars to learn that the principle of justification by faith does not mean that Protestants care nothing for holiness. "There is in the Reformation a full doctrine of real sanctification by the Holy Spirit," Father Moeller says, "only Protestant terminology prefers not to attach this aspect to the term 'justification'; the legend 'sin boldly, but believe more boldly,' at least in the 'immoral' interpretation that certain polemicists give it, appears to be a caricature . . ." Such naiveté is not entirely the fault of the Roman Catholic scholars. For centuries justification by faith has been a Protestant weapon against "dead works," "vain repetitions," and all the other uncharitable descriptions of Roman Catholic ethical and liturgical piety. When we permit Rome's people to see Reformation doctrine from inside our experience, and when they have the desire to do so, all manner of happy results follow.

For instance, on the theme of justification by faith, Louis Bouyer,

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another French priest, asserts that Luther's basic doctrine is without doubt the true Catholic doctrine, affirmed even by the Council of Trent. He believes that Roman contenders for their Church, in the heat of the battle with Luther, retreated from the full Catholic position in order to damn more thoroughly the Lutheran heresy. Not the principle, Bouyer would say, but the application is the Lutheran error. It is not justification by faith but the principle that grace is extrinsic—not actually worked out within the believer but only imputed to him—that is the Lutheran heresy in his view.

But Moeller, as we have seen, is happy about his rediscovery of the Reformed idea of sanctification, that is, the working out of God's Grace within believers in Christ. And on justification by faith he says:

The Council of Trent itself, in the first chapter of Session VI, for example, which is dedicated to justification, insists on the fact that neither the Jews nor the Gentiles have been able to be freed by themselves from the power of the devil and of death and that they were slaves of sin; Chapter V of the same session, in the text where it insists on the necessity of a preparation for justification in adults, inserts the whole development in the context of prevenient grace. I remember a lecture on these decrees at an ecumenical meeting: both the Reformed and the Catholics were overwhelmed to discover to what a degree the Council of Trent, in even the most erroneous passages according to the Reformed, stays close to St. Augustine's position and underlines without ceasing that "God works in us, both to will and to do." It would seem that further dialogue may leap this great sixteenth-century hurdle.<sup>1</sup>

Father Moeller continues his account of Roman Catholic profit from Protestant encounter by affirming his joy in discovering that the Protestant emphasis on the Bible does not make every man his own pope, and that Protestant scholarship is recovering an interest in the Fathers and the ecumenical councils, making dialogue possible once more.

Father Moeller speaks with gratitude of a better Catholic theological balance resulting from encounter with the following Reformation concerns: the place of the laity, the place of preaching, the centrality of the resurrection, the function of the Bible. He hints that Reformed Churchmen equally concerned with Catholic doctrine might correct their own imbalance. And he commends the formal prayers and liturgies of all Christians to each other because "Christian balance . . . never appears better than in the rites and prayer books of the churches, for this balance is centered on a Life and a Word which communicates itself, on a divine Love offered to man in the fellowship of his brothers."

After a sober warning that we are still stalemated by a differing concept of "how Christ continues his life in the Church," he concludes by pleading

<sup>1</sup> The quotations from Charles Moeller are the author's translation of an article in *Verbum Caro*, No. 41, p. 19.

for a deeper mutual study of the function of the Holy Spirit, in the Church. "A fruitful ecumenical dialogue should bear on the Holy Spirit, for he is Love and Koinonia, communion in the agape."<sup>2</sup>

## II

Father Moeller's article is typical of a kind of thinking frequently met in Roman Catholic France, Germany, and the low countries. A deep interest in Karl Barth is arising among young Roman Catholic clergy and critical studies have appeared in which much of Barth is admired and claimed as "Catholic theology."

A very recent development of even greater significance is the proposed chair of "Ecumenical Theology" to be established at the University of Louvain. This chair, accepted and requested by the Belgian bishops and authorized by Rome, will have a succession of visiting professors, most of them non-Roman Catholics. Those who have worked hard to establish the chair point out that this is a theological gain on two fronts: first, non-Roman Catholics will be teaching theology for the first time under Roman auspices, and, secondly, the very name of the course indicates that "ecumenical theology" is wider in scope than the boundaries of the Roman Catholic Church. This is the first official admission of the fact.

Probably more important than the theological dialogue across the Reformation line is the spirit of good will in which it takes place.

Pictures of a Corpus Christi Day procession in Munich show the Lutheran pastors walking with other civic dignitaries behind the Blessed Sacrament. It did not occur to the Protestants to decline the invitation, nor to the Roman Catholic hierarchy to withhold it. The invitation and the acceptance of it have nothing to do with Lutheran and Roman Catholic theology on the doctrine of the reserved sacrament, but are regarded as an opportunity for Christians to witness to the Lordship of Christ in his world. In his honor both communions march the streets of the city together—and this for the first time in over four hundred years. Lutheran and Roman Catholic theologians, meeting one another in an informal movement known as *Una Sancta*, have warned that actual union between the two bodies seems as impossible now as ever it did; nonetheless they commit themselves to God who brings the impossible to pass. It is this disciplined hopefulness of the theologians coupled with a lay willingness to march together in the streets which characterizes the new movement.

<sup>2</sup> The preceding six paragraphs also appear on pp. 12-13 in *New Patterns for Christian Action*, by The Reverend Samuel J. Wylie, published by the Seabury Press, 1959, 96 pp., \$1.50. Used by permission.

English-speaking visitors find French ecumenical hospitality almost overwhelming. Though far from customary, it is not unknown for Anglican priests to celebrate private eucharists under the roof of a French Roman Catholic convent or church. Well-instructed French Catholics have no scruples about attending the daily offices in English Cathedrals, joining in the prayers and hymns. Letters from French priests to clergy of other churches close frequently with an expression such as "yours fraternally in our Lord," or "yours in our common apostolate." French priests who read English show a keen interest in contemporary Protestant theology and a remarkable knowledge of Anglicanism. A visiting Episcopal clergyman in sports clothes is likely to be introduced as "a Father from America" and left to explain, if he cares, the reason for the contrast in dress with the black *soutane* of the French.<sup>8</sup>

More recently, under the sponsorship of Oscar Cullmann, Roman and Protestant good will has been channeled into acts of philanthropy in which each religious group collects money for charitable enterprises of the other. The action is based on the premise that while *unity* is impossible, *solidarity* is both right and reasonable for Christians. In many of the instances he reports, the ill-will of centuries has melted away in practical Christian charity. It is significant that his presentation of his plan at Union Theological Seminary last winter was attended by a good number of Roman Catholic priests.

### III

While this sort of spontaneous good will is far from the American norm at the moment, there are signs that a new openness is at hand on the Roman side of the barrier. European observers warn American Protestants and Anglicans that the solidarity of the American Roman Catholic Church and its over-devotion (by European standards) to the papacy mean that, once Rome indicates that "separated brothers" are entitled to consideration and good will that "heretics" forfeit, the American part of the Roman Church will follow the papal directive more thoroughly than any other section of Roman Christendom. The word "warn" is used advisedly. It is difficult to say that genuine good will from the Roman side would be immediately accepted by most non-Roman Christians or that it would be understood in the context in which it was offered. There is a real question whether American Protestantism is sufficiently theologically oriented to accept *solidarity* with Roman Catholics, while accepting also the Roman necessity of maintaining the exclusive doctrine of the Church which Rome

<sup>8</sup> The preceding two paragraphs appear on p. 11 of *New Patterns for Christian Action*.

has no intention of abandoning. To recognize one another "in Christ" while remaining clearly aware of intolerable defects in each other's theology will be as difficult for Protestants and Anglicans as for Roman Catholics. Dogma-conscious Rome will have to learn to love those who hold "error" without compromising in the exposure of error. Activist Protestants cannot encounter Roman Catholics without taking classical theology more seriously than most of us are prepared to do. Real encounter at any level will be a disturbing experience all around.

Yet, the beginnings are in sight. The Rev. Gustave Weigel, S.J., has been widely quoted on the necessity for encounter, understanding and charity between Protestants and Roman Catholics in this country. A gathering of clergymen and laymen under Lutheran auspices in October, 1959, at Toledo, Ohio, with Father Weigel as chief speaker attracted wide press notice. Other interconfessional conferences and small group discussions on a continuing basis are springing up across the country. The time seems to be ripe for informal discussions for mutual information, provided that they remain unpublicized, unstructured and uninterpreted. Roman Catholic clergy and lay scholars are willing, at any rate, to enter such dialogue in a way that they have not been for seventy-five years or more.

The recent chorus of comments on the possibility of a common version of the Bible for Catholics and Protestants was on the whole favorable. The willingness of American Roman Catholics to draw on the fruits of Protestant biblical scholarship seems to be growing. The Roman Catholic review *America*, in its October 24, 1959 edition, quotes Brendan McGrath, O.S.B., president of the Catholic Biblical Association of America, as saying that progress in Catholic biblical scholarship was due "in no small measure" to the "altogether admirable" willingness of Catholic scholars to avail themselves of the "assured results" and "fruitful labors" of their non-Catholic colleagues. Attending the meeting at which Father McGrath's address was given was the Reverend Robert C. Dentan, a priest of the Episcopal Church and an official delegate of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis. The two societies have agreed to exchange official delegates at their annual meetings henceforth.

Dialogue in quarterly and monthly magazines between the Roman Church and the Churches of the Reformation has increased markedly. Book reviews in denominational journals include relevant works across the Reformation line with noticeably increased frequency.

None of these activities in any sense indicates that the great religious institutions are closer together as corporate bodies than they have been

before, or that grave differences of conviction are being ignored. In fact, greater conversation indicates how deep the differences are, and how irreconcilable at the present time. However, the growing encounters are deepening charity on both sides, and the desire for unity, and the willingness to ask that the Holy Spirit may guide us to a wisdom not yet ours.

#### IV

What can we glean from Europe's longer experience in Christian solidarity as we seek to achieve it in the United States? What underlies the humility that so strikes the attention of an American visitor?

First, the European Christian knows that Christendom is a thing of the past. No states are "Christian" states: no dignities and rights are inherently the privilege of ecclesiastics. Christians are hard to find, and they enjoy each other's company when they meet. A Reformed pastor and a Roman priest serving an incarnate, crucified and risen Lord in the midst of an unheeding populace are driven to each other for support. By contrast we in the United States still live in a seller's market. We compete for the available souls in the suburban districts. It makes trust difficult. We need more grace to love our separated brother than do our European colleagues. Loneliness does not drive us toward him—yet.

Besides the pressure of the times, three theological insights seem to have caught the minds of all Christians across their confessional labels. They are fresh and vital with a New Testament quality to them precisely because adversity in post-Christendom has pushed the Church back to a New Testament mentality.

The first is a rediscovery of the gospel in its full evangelical simplicity. Wherever the European liturgical movement exists it is characterized by an early Christian exuberance. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature . . . Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." These and other New Testament references to the joy of new life in Christ are the language of the new Christians who respond also to each other. It is expressed liturgically because those who rise in the newness of Christ's life into a corporate fellowship discover a distinctive dynamic: the very life of Christ; a distinctive mission, an apostolate: the extension of Christ's priestly and prophetic ministry; and a distinctive goal: the pilgrimage to the Promised Land, while practicing its customs, singing its songs, and living by its fruits en route.

The second general insight is the recovery of the Word. Reformed, Lutheran and Roman Catholic Christians alike have rediscovered the

authority of the living Word through the reading and preaching of the Bible. What Karl Barth has done for Protestants, Daniélou, deLubac and others have done for Roman Catholics. The liturgical movement is a biblical movement: the Bible studied, the Bible preached, the Bible heard in the people's tongue and in an understandable version. The great French-language Bible today, hailed by all Christians, is the work of Dominicans stationed in Jerusalem. For an expression of sentiments Calvin and Barth would echo, hear these words from a Roman Catholic priest, Louis Bouyer, member of a monastic order:

The liturgy in its unity and in its perfection is to be seen as the meeting of God's people called together in convocation by God's Word through the apostolic ministry, in order that the People consciously united together, may hear God's Word itself in Christ, may adhere to that Word by means of prayer and praise amid which the Word is proclaimed, and so seal by the Eucharistic sacrifice the Covenant which is accomplished by that same Word.<sup>4</sup>

The third theological concern shared by Protestant and Catholic Christians alike is eschatology; eschatology not as abstract doctrine but as a sharing in the present enjoyment of the *eschaton*.

Two figures describe the Eucharist in the liturgical movement. First, it is the fulfillment of the Passover; the meal eaten by Israel on foot, staff in hand, ready to venture into the night to escape Egyptian bondage and to win the Promised Land. Secondly, the Holy Communion is the Messianic Banquet in the New Testament. Christian worship is both the Paschal meal till he come, and the sharing, now, of the Bread of Heaven. Ordinary communicants cannot thus neatly summarize their worship, of course, but any parish that has caught the tempo of the movement is a joyful one affirming the Christian hope in the teeth of the enemy.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!" says I Peter, "By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."<sup>5</sup> This is the theme of much preaching and the clue to the use of song in eucharistic worship in modern Roman France. In a series of about ten sermons on the Eucharist at the Church of St. Severin in Paris, three were entitled as follows: "A People on the March," "A People Who Sing," and "Till He Come."

<sup>4</sup> Bouyer, Louis, *Life and Liturgy*, Sheed and Ward (London), p. 29.

<sup>5</sup> I Peter 1:3-5.

It is hard to imagine a deeply rewarding rapprochement between Reformation and Roman Christians in the United States until these same factors that have so deeply engaged our colleagues in Europe and Asia catch our attention also. Perhaps the key-concept, or the catalyst, is the actual recognition that Christendom is no more. When we no longer view any Christian body as a competitor but rather as an ally in a hostile environment, we will be ready to sit with them to reread the New Testament and to pick up its challenge in a way that we have not needed to do since the Church's dubious victory in the days of Constantine. It should be more evident than it is that crisis days have come upon us. Samuel Miller, in a sermon quoted in the November 14, 1959, issue of *The Saturday Review*, reminds us that we tend to live in a revolutionary age as anachronisms, unaware of the changes that surround us. "In religion," he says, "the conserving tendency of faith exaggerates this indifference to the changing world. Thus the Church may long deceive itself by its spectacular success in numbers and prestige without knowing how hollow it has become, or how feeble and unintelligible its message sounds to a world which has moved into new dimensions of knowledge and fear." He goes on to say, "we have not deliberately renounced our Christian heritage, but for the most part it no longer plays a dy...ic role either in the motivation of our actions or in the judgments which evaluate our satisfactions."<sup>6</sup>

We must ask at this point: Shall we labor to create a new Christian culture with materials coming from the new discoveries, disciplines, and attitudes of our time, or shall we succumb to an essentially nonreligious culture? The answers to a challenge of that dimension cannot be Reformed or Lutheran or Anglican or Roman Catholic or Orthodox. Christian thinkers are at a premium. They will create ways of thinking together once the need is apparent. When we do, our experience will parallel that of our European friends and we may learn to say, as one Roman Catholic friend said to me: "We have learned, here, not only to respect but also to admire what the Holy Spirit does among other Christians."

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<sup>6</sup> *The Saturday Review*, Nov. 14, 1959.

# Frontiers in the Interpretation of Religion

WILLIAM A. BEARDSLEE

## I. THE QUEST FOR FAITH

THE URGENT QUEST for a living faith involves dimensions of life far more fundamental than adequate scholarly understanding of religion. Nonetheless, the frontiers of understanding must be crucial points of concern for thoughtful religious people, since faith must withdraw from full interaction with contemporary life if it cannot authentically confront the full range of concerns of the men it addresses.

Historical discoveries, of which the Dead Sea Scrolls are only one example, have stimulated religious studies. Far more important for the resurgence of religious scholarship is the new awareness in our culture that some religious roots are necessary for a culture to respond adequately to the shattering convulsions of our age. It is now a commonplace for specialists in other fields—scientists or statesmen—to call for a return to religion and to try to relate their own special field to religion. What this new concern for religion means for religious *scholarship* is difficult to assess. There has been a very genuine growth of concern for religion among educated people in the past fifteen years. This growth has made possible a real advance in religious thought, but probably has not contributed to it as yet so significantly as is often believed. The men at the frontiers of religious thought are, to a surprising degree, older men—Niebuhr, Tillich, Barth, Bultmann. These men were able to sense the crisis many years ago, before religion became popular in academic circles. The response to their work shows that our culture has become more aware of its precarious situation, but it is a striking and rather sobering fact that these older men still are the most vigorous and incisive interpreters of the relevance of Christian faith to the present scene.

## II. THE INTELLECTUAL SITUATION

At any rate the rediscovery of religion as something with which an educated man must be concerned has thrown into the spotlight the central

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question of scholarly thought about the Christian faith—even though it may not have solved it; the problem, that is, of the relation between “committed” thought and “objective” thought. What is the relation between what a *competent observer* sees in a psychological phenomenon such as conversion or a book of faith such as the New Testament, and what a *believer* sees in his own conversion or in the book from which he draws his inspiration? This difficult question is a special form of a question which has become acute in Western thought since the time of Kant. The mind as such does not give us direct knowledge of reality. Its results are largely shaped by its own necessities—or limitations. Therefore the relativities and obscurities of perception, plus the limitations which the forms of thought impose, compel us to recognize an artificiality and relativism in the products of the intellect.

In former times it could be said that the work of the mind at the frontier of thought about religion, or anything else, was a refining of the knowledge of reality as it appeared to the untrained mind. Now it appears that the work of the mind, when it is rigorous and clear about its method, results in an almost complete abolition of the world as known by common sense and in the construction of a highly artificial world, a “model” that is built by the mind to account for certain selected areas of experience. Yet the religious man always holds that through his faith he achieves some sort of direct apprehension not merely of the reality of the world, but of a reality which transcends the world. Thus religious scholarship has felt with special sharpness the gap between knowledge understood as immediate awareness, and knowledge understood as the development of a set of constructs which enable one to understand better the behavior of carefully selected data.

How to relate this world of abstractions constructed by the mind of the thinker to the world in which we live as responsible human beings is a most difficult question. Some have held that the world of “models” constructed from observation and experience is the only world which can count for the modern thinking man. The only trouble with this vigorous acceptance of the limitations of knowledge is that it is exceedingly difficult to live with it. For living means coming to grips with a whole range of realities which are exceedingly difficult to reduce to orderly experienced data. The most central of these is the fact of *responsibility*. It has been a great part of the effort of Christian thought in recent times to show that responsibility and the awareness of the “other” that it entails have a validity of their own apart from any objectification in a pattern of thought.

The fundamental reason for the difference between knowledge of the objective sort, and responsibility, is seen in the fact that objective knowledge enables one to describe sequences, but it does not enable one to describe choices.

It is true that contemporary thinking about nature is emphasizing the indeterminacy of sequences in the natural world, and there are thinkers who have tried to develop a theory of responsibility and choice in relation to the freedom of indeterminacy. The weight of Christian thought has chosen the other alternative and said that if you start with description of data you will never get to responsibility, which is different in kind. The Christian thinker works in a world in which the orderly stages between nature, man, and God, as known in an earlier theology, have been replaced by a gap between the world as known to objective thought, an artificial "model" world, and a world in which real people live in the agony of their responsibility but with immense difficulty in getting guidance from their minds in the use of their responsibility. Increasingly this situation has led to the stressing of religious understanding as the shared knowledge of a community—not something that can be publicly set forth like the knowledge of the atom, but something that is known to be real when the life of the community is shared in commitment.

### III. THE OBSERVER OF RELIGION

In this situation it is clear that the student of Christianity may try to operate within the perspective of neutral, objective study, which views religion as a phenomenon to be described, or he may try to think within the community of faith, explaining the faith to his fellow believers or trying to make it intelligible to the outsider. A given thinker may move back and forth between these modes of approach, and some problems of interpretation are much more directly connected with the perspective of faith than others.

Viewed as a method, objective scholarship has been subjected to severe criticism of late, by those who hold that religion can be known only by the *participant*. Nonetheless the work of the observer of religious phenomena continues to be one of the important ways in which knowledge of religious phenomena is advanced. Two types of such scholarship should be distinguished: first, those approaches which attempt to study religion with the exactness of scientific study, and secondly, those approaches which while not viewing religion as an actual participant, nonetheless understand it by imaginative participation.

The first approach, which tries to be strictly scientific, suffers the same limitations as does any strictly scientific approach to historical phenomena. There are such large elements of the unique in religious phenomena that attempts to quantify and to "repeat the experiment" are doomed to failure. Nonetheless in limited ways this approach has shown usefulness particularly in the areas of sociology of religion and psychology of religion. In the main the result of studies carried on in this vein has been to emphasize how like religious phenomena are to other phenomena. In the main, therefore, the net result of the studies of religion which have attempted to be strictly scientific has been "reductionist"; these studies have tended to erase any distinctiveness from religion, since the phenomena of religion which can be observed scientifically disclose little that is different from other phenomena.

This fact has proved rather discouraging to students of religion, for most of them are religious men. They have suspected that they were wasting their time with this approach, and they have cast about for other ways of studying the phenomena which interest them. Thus this method of study is not now a vigorous frontier of the study of religion. The day will probably come again when new phases of research into religious phenomena by methods of quantification and controlled experiment will arouse great interest. The method will always be subject to severe limitations. But there is no reason why within its limits it should not produce valuable results. Its results in all probability will continue to show what they have to date—that religious phenomena are not isolated and independent functions in the life of the individual or of society. They are functions of the whole self and thus empirical religious behavior often contains large elements which can be understood adequately without reference to the distinctively religious and its norms.

The more important phase of the study of religion from the point of view of the observer is the work of those who conceive this study as allowing the perception of structures of religious life by imaginative participation. One still remains an observer, though admitting a range of data as relevant which cannot be approached by measure, objectification, or experiment, but only by human understanding. Such study is extremely varied in scope and interest. The method has been perfected particularly in the history of religion—what used to be called comparative religion—since there the student is compelled to try to understand more than he can possibly participate in. It may be useful to classify such studies as oriented either phenomenologically or historically, though the distinction is not a rigid one. In

both cases the student attempts to understand and describe a phenomenon. Phenomenological study of religion as such is concerned to develop a theory of types. It aims to grasp the alternative structures which religious experience assumes. Strict phenomenological study makes no affirmation about the reality which stands behind the phenomenon. It is concerned to understand *what appears* in human religious experience. It finds that such experience is not infinitely various, but that it falls into a limited number of types which recur, often quite independently of each other historically. Gerhardus von der Leeuw's *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*<sup>1</sup> and Mircéa Eliade's *Patterns in Comparative Religion*<sup>2</sup> are notable works of this type; the late Joachin Wach was deeply influenced by this approach. This method of study is still a fruitful one although it is not as popular today as it might be, since it is essentially an observer's method, and many religious scholars today are impatient with the nonparticipant.

Observation of religious phenomena which is historically oriented is harder to describe than phenomenology of religion, since phenomenology is static, concerned with stable types, while historical studies are usually dynamic, concerned with movement from one situation to another, with the connections between one stage and another. That is, the historian is usually concerned not just to describe a certain situation, but to relate it to what came before and to what followed. The difficulty of developing an adequate theory of historical connections is well known; in the case of the history of religious phenomena, the problem is made more difficult by the fact that the participant senses God as one of the determining factors, and this compels the observer to make some decision about the relation between his theory of connections in history and that of the participant whom he is describing. Hence the selection and interpretation of historical evidence involves not only imaginative participation, but a concern or point of view which provides a standard of selection. Thus historical studies, while demanding the highest scholarly objectivity of which a student is capable, nonetheless disclose to him his involvement in the human situation and remind him that objective study of religion is only one pole of religious inquiry and not an autonomous and independent activity.

#### IV. INTERPRETATION WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF FAITH

If we turn from the study of religion by the observer to the interpretation of faith from within the believing group, the first point to note is

<sup>1</sup> New York, 1938.

<sup>2</sup> Sheed and Ward, 1958.

that so far as the frontiers of scholarship are concerned, the distinction which used to be observed between expounding the Christian faith to the believer (theology), and stating it in such a way that its challenge can be grasped by the outsider (apologetics), is no longer very important. Christian thinking is striving for more adequate ways of stating the faith *both* to reveal its real demand to those who are within the group but have come to take faith too much for granted, *and* to present it in its authentic demand to those who have rejected it.

The growing edge of Christian thought lies at this point of rediscovery of the authentic challenge of the faith. Sometimes the quest is followed by attempting to let the faith speak for itself, in at least theoretical independence from the cultural conditions of the moment, and sometimes the task is undertaken specifically to restate the faith in terms of the language of the present cultural situation. In both cases, however, the attempts at re-thinking which are most probing and significant are those which recognize the gap between the world of abstract thought and the world of immediate awareness. This is not to say that all creative thought in the church concerns itself with this problem. Nonetheless, from the point of view of intellectual frontiers, it seems to be the case that the most suggestive movements are those which are aware of the consequence of living in the post-scientific period, and which realize the difficulty of including religious realities in the same realm of discourse with matters that can be described objectively or historically.

One way of coming to grips with the gap between knowledge and reality is to try to overcome it, and to reunify reality in a comprehensive system which will do justice both to God and the highest aspirations of man's inner self, and to the observed sequences of nature. Probably the attempt to recreate a philosophic synthesis of religion and nature will become a central task of Christian thought at some time in the future as it has been at times in the past. It is not being neglected today; Charles Hartshorne is one of its able exponents. The prevailing temper of thinkers within the Church, however, is to turn to other lines of approach because they fear that the synthetic view tends to reduce the distinctively Christian apprehension of God to the level of general truths of religion.

Another line of approach is that exemplified by Paul Tillich, who holds the world apart from faith but understands the two as related by the method of correlation: life in the world produces questions; knowledge of the world, of cultural reality, cannot answer these questions, but drives a man to seek a deep grounding of his being in a level of reality which

can be apprehended only by faith. Here we have a pattern of thought which takes seriously both man's involvement in contemporary culture and his reaching out to a realm of faith which cannot be known objectively. The work of Tillich has been particularly important in showing the relevance of culture to religion; he shows how culture in its different aspects has a religious dimension in that it expresses a questing or questioning to which faith provides the only adequate response.

A third approach is represented by Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann. Both of these, different as they are, are interpreters who attempt to stand within the community of faith and proclaim its gospel. Here the emphasis is on the autonomy of the gospel as an encounter with God who concretely offers himself to men in Christ. Barth and Bultmann have gone separate ways and they are often thought of as if Barth stood within the church and interpreted its gospel in its own terms, while Bultmann stood in the secular culture and interpreted the gospel in the culture's terms. This common impression, however, is quite wrong. Both Barth and Bultmann insist on the gospel as an encounter with God which has its own integrity. It is true that Barth has increasingly relied on the tradition of the Christian church to provide a vehicle for the communication of faith, while Bultmann has with increasing definiteness insisted that adequate language for the gospel must come from the immediate cultural situation if it is to be rightly understood by the hearer. But both insist that faith cannot be considered a "thing" that can be objectified. Thus both accept the gap between controllable knowledge of objects and immediate awareness of faith as not merely an inevitable situation today but as a religious asset, since this gap points up the noncontrollable character of faith.

Let us consider the work of Bultmann, since it is the center of a most active controversy and in the clearest sense a growing edge of religious thought. The focus of debate is an awkward German word which we render as "demythologizing." Bultmann's project of demythologizing is often understood as an attempt to translate the unique, historical Christian message into general religious truths, but exactly the opposite is his intention. His demythologizing is a prerequisite to adequate *preaching*.

"Demythologizing" springs from an essay which Bultmann wrote in 1941, and which received wide circulation when it was published in *Kerygma und Mythos*, Vol. 1, in 1948.<sup>3</sup> Since that time a flood of articles and books has appeared on the subject of myth in the Christian religion. Bultmann's

<sup>3</sup> Translated as *Kerygma and Myth* (ed. H. W. Bartsch, trans. Reginald H. Fuller. London: S.P.C.K., 1957).

thesis is that the New Testament message as it stands can no longer be accepted by modern man, since it is stated in the forms of ancient mythological thought (a "three-story universe," angels, etc.) in which men no longer believe. The older liberalism tried to overcome this difficulty by disengaging certain central ideas as the essence of Christianity, and discarding as "husk" the "outmoded" mythology. Bultmann rejects this method since he thinks that ideas about God become part of the objective world and thus a substitute for God, and because he realizes that in religion ideas may be used in different settings so that an idea alone is a very inadequate clue to the structure of faith. The theologian must look for something deeper: a grasp of life, a stance toward life, a "posture," which is distinctive of the faith.

Such a posture or stance to life is reflected in the New Testament primarily in ideas drawn from Jewish apocalyptic eschatology. Modern men can no longer believe in these apocalyptic ideas—that the end of the world and the return of Christ are imminent, for instance. Therefore the task of the interpreter is to speak of faith in modern terms which modern men can believe in, and which will also disclose the posture toward life and toward God which stands behind the ancient apocalyptic ideas. The contemporary terms which Bultmann finds useful are those of existentialism—a movement of thought which has attempted to reaffirm the genuine freedom and dignity of man by insisting on his inescapable responsibility to choose for himself, in spite of the disappearance of responsibility from the object-world of intellectual construction.

The appropriate way of disclosing the true, tough demand of faith, Bultmann holds, is to restate it in such a way that men will see that Christianity is not asking us to believe in an objective world which we can no longer believe in, but that it demands of us a radical existential decision; that is, a total rejection of the securities which we find by relying on the world of predictable sequences, and casting ourselves in complete faith on the unknowable future of God. Any representation of God as acting in the objective world must therefore be rejected as myth. This does not mean that God does not act; it means that nothing in the objective world can be taken as a proof of his action. History as known to the historian does not disclose God; neither does nature as known to the observer. This world is void of God—but that fact only makes all the more necessary the passionate act of decision in which God is found by faith in responsible encounter.

Bultmann's proposal is not a radical demythologization in the sense

that religion is reduced to general philosophic truths, even though he speaks of the elimination of myth and of the antiquated world-view of the New Testament. For there is in Bultmann's interpretation a third term beside mythological language and nonmythological language. This third term is *Kerygma*. "*Kerygma*" is a word very much in vogue nowadays among scholars even though it may not be widely familiar. It means "preaching" or "proclamation," and is used in the sense of "challenge." The Christian *Kerygma* is simply the Christian message, the story of Christ; but the aspect of this which Bultmann emphasizes is the way in which the message calls the hearer's life into question, and compels him to make a radical decision which entails the complete abandonment of his old securities and commitment of himself to the unknown in faith.

Bultmann maintains that the New Testament can be thoroughly demythologized; that is, reinterpreted to eliminate all representation of divine action in the concrete world as known objectively and historically; yet it must not be reduced to the level of the general. Bultmann sees the distinctive character of the Christian *Kerygma* in the encounter of the hearer with the presence of Christ. The disclosure of the self to itself when it is stripped of pretenses in the presence of its Lord is the distinctive element of Christian faith, and is that which makes it impossible to dissolve Christianity into a general form of religion. Thus Bultmann's bold proposal that neither ideas nor history as known to the historians are in any constant way essential to the Christian faith, is undertaken in a genuinely missionary spirit. By divesting the Christ of those elements which hide his authentic challenge from modern man he attempts to reinvigorate the Christian Gospel and make it possible for contemporary men to hear its real substance and not merely its external forms.

Perhaps Bultmann's term "demythologizing" is an unhappy one. He is not attempting to reduce the element of mystery and holiness in awareness of God: his work has exactly the opposite purpose. He opposes myth because he thinks of myth as the objectification of the divine, but he does not replace myth with philosophical understanding. Rather he replaces it with *Kerygma*, that is, with Christian preaching which challenges men to find a new existence which the world cannot give, and which can never become an object which can be possessed.

The difficult question about Bultmann's project is the question of his understanding of Christ. In the first place, his emphasis has constantly been on the human response: on decision, on obedience. This is typical of Bultmann, who is afraid that if we affirm too much about God we will

destroy the distinctive character of faith, which is to know that one is not at his own disposal. Clearly Bultmann does not fully reflect the New Testament at this point, for in countless ways the New Testament proclaims that God's goodness is what is made known in Christ, and not primarily a human predicament. Thus we should say that Bultmann's Christ who summons men to obedient faith is an impressive and authentic restatement of a part of the New Testament Christ, but that Christ in his aspect of one who brings the divine presence and promise into human existence is not fully represented in Bultmann's view. His demythologizing is aimed to make possible an adequate human response, not to give an adequate account of God. Yet difficult as it is to speak of God in a world from which he often seems to be absent, the center of the task of proclaiming the Christian message is to speak about God. In other words, preaching involves a real knowledge of God which Bultmann's perspective severely limits.

On the one hand, proclamation of God in Christ will always require a depth of symbolic language that might well be described as "myth," even though we may often have to express the faith in symbols different from those drawn from the New Testament. If another barbaric term can be forgiven, an adequate preaching may require "demythologization," but if so it will have to be followed by "remythologization." At this point one of the encouraging signs of vigor in Christian life is the growing concern of writers and artists with religious themes.

Furthermore, it appears that Bultmann has too readily accepted a momentary phase of contemporary thought in accepting the total separation between the objective world and the world of faith. Not only art and symbol, but also rational knowledge, for all its limitations, has a place in the knowledge of God. In spite of the difficulties of knowledge, and in spite of the perversion of religious knowledge when it becomes a possession which provides the believer a false security, the Christian thinker must continue to strive for an adequate *theology*, a coherent system of statements about God as known in Christian faith.

Such knowledge can never be complete or final, but it ought not to be set over against radical choice as totally different in kind. In fact, by illuminating the nature of decision it not only helps to make the true decision, in which man finds himself, possible, but also helps make the inner decision relevant to the whole complex life in which we live.

Finally, Bultmann's demythologization raises the question of the extent to which the Christian message can be expressed adequately in ways

of understanding derived from modern culture. It is not enough to say that the faith must be expressed in terms that men can understand out of their present life. It contains depths of meaning for which modern, even existentialist, language may well prove inadequate. Indeed, existentialist language is appropriate not merely because it is modern, but more profoundly because it is itself derived from the Christian tradition. Bultmann undervalues the church and the Christian tradition as carriers of the faith, even though his vigorous protest against reliance on inherited forms of communication of the faith is very much in order.

#### V. A TASK FOR SCHOLAR AND CHURCH

This survey of some of the difficulties and some of the live points in Christian scholarship brings to mind an urgent question. In the past, significant renewals of the Christian faith have usually taken place when a man of profound faith was able *both* to immerse himself in the speculative thought of his day *and* to share in the life of the simple believer of his day. How do we stand with respect to this possibility in our own day? It appears that the gap between simple faith and scholarly inquiry is as wide today as it has ever been, and this fact may work a severe limitation on the possibilities of renewal and deepening of faith. A primary responsibility of both unscholarly believers and scholars who stand within the circle of Christian faith is to deepen their lines of communication with each other in the hope that their conversations may make possible one of those mysterious discharges of spiritual energy which come from time to time in the history of the church, one of which is so desperately needed today.

# The Lay Renaissance and the Church's Nature

FREDERICK K. WENTZ

THE LAY TRAINING CENTERS of western Europe, perhaps seventy in number, are the spark plugs of an exciting contemporary movement called "The Lay Renaissance." Places like Iona in Scotland, Sigtuna in Sweden, Bad Boll and other Evangelical Academies in Germany, Kerk en Wereld in Holland, Bossey in Switzerland, Taizé in France have become by-words for adventuresome involvement for Christ's sake in the issues and forms of modern life. Their counterparts are just now emerging in American Protestantism.

These centers and their leaders merit attention because of their *deeds* in an age when people habitually look past a man's words to peer closely at his deeds. But there is a message in the life of these centers which can best be expressed in this article by describing ideas. The leaders of these European centers are motivated by fresh ideas, in the first place about the church's task and in the second place about the church's very nature.

After a corrosive depression, an outburst of dictators, and the destructive chaos of World War II; after Germans, for example, experienced the *Nullpunkt* (zero-point) of 1945, some pioneer churchmen—men like George MacLeod, Eberhard Mueller, Helmut Thielicke, Hendrik Kraemer—were asking with full seriousness the same questions being asked by the church's critics: Has the church a message for this modern world? Where are the fruits by which the church can be known? What do Christians do, that makes any difference, to serve the *special needs* of this *peculiar present* age? Behind their questions lay the deep conviction that the church's central purpose is "to serve the present age" (in Charles Wesley's phrase), to minister to this world's needs.

Obviously this involves going into the present age, moving out to meet these modern men. The church certainly should be a catapult to hurl Christians into the world. This forces the Christian to identify

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himself with those he seeks to reach, to get alongside them to gossip the gospel among them. One thinks of the famous worker priests of France as dramatic illustration. But how is this identification to take place? These lay center leaders can reveal to us three insights into the problem and three facets of the strategy that emerges.

## I

1. The first insight is this. Christians, the church, must listen with great respect, painstaking care, and no prejudgetment to this present age and its modern men. What is the critic actually saying? Who is this man indifferent to Christ? Why are these others hostile to Christianity?

Men find it hard really to listen. Especially Christians, who think they have the answers. A. W. Kist has a conference center in an old castle near Leiden, Holland, where he seeks to bring men into the experience of community—human community and Christian community. He emphasizes the community of silence and hearing, reminding us that this is the fundamental posture of men before God, listening for the Word. Thus his conferences sit in silence for five minutes after a lecture or Bible reading, inwardly quieting the clamoring voices of their own ideas and defenses in order to listen to the message. Thus the church must quiet its many voices to listen for God's Word as it is spoken in his world, in this present age, even through our worldly fellow men who are God's creatures, too.

The Evangelical Academies in Germany, numbering nearly a score in the various territorial churches of that divided land, are significant listening places for Christianity in the modern world. In these conference centers the church provides a neutral platform for the discussion of public issues, makes contact with many secular people at the point of their interest, and comes to serious encounter with the deep problems of modern society. Any subject of public concern can find place in these conferences—Russia today, modern jazz, contemporary clothing fashions, the phenomenal prosperity of West Germany, East-West tensions, the responsibilities of dancing teachers and night-club entertainers.

In more than a decade of open-ended, patient encounters with the modern world through many conferences and through other listening-posts, these European churchmen have heard and learned much that has practical significance. Two clear notes about modern man himself are particularly noteworthy, providing our second and third insights.

2. For one thing, he has a social passion that is God-given. At his best he is possessed of a burning desire for social justice; he puts fervor

into his political commitments and gives an intense interest to current events, economic policies and international relations. Often he finds his personal destiny wrapped up in these matters. This means that he looks at life as a whole and is impatient with any word from the church that is partial in its meaning. It will not do to talk about a soul that is separate. "The mark of the modern man," says George MacLeod, "is that he is becoming total."

There are dangers in this fact, of course. But the church errs when it says in effect: Since this is a collective age in which totalitarianism finds a place, since it is a day of vast social movements in which an evil communism flourishes, *therefore* we must set our faces against this age and its penchant for social movement. Such a response evidences a lack of faith. God is at work in the twentieth century, too. The church must find in the age, or bring to it, the divine intention behind this God-given social passion.

In other words, the church must move into the common life of men, into politics and economics, into the daily round of work and play. The task of the Iona Community, in Ralph Morton's words, is "to carry the roof of the Church over all the building of men's daily life, to open up a door between the place of worship and the place of work, to see the Christian life in a total unity."<sup>1</sup> If the gospel is to reach contemporary mankind, it will do so only as the church faces whole men in their whole need and in their whole web of human relations.

3. This conclusion emerges just as inevitably from the other insight about the modern non-Christian which these European lay centers have discovered. Our modern man is secular in a thoroughgoing way, i.e. he is cut off from any transcendent and ultimate commitment. For him this world and this age are the whole of it. He may have a wistful desire to be possessed by some ultimate, but he cannot come to such experience, certainly he cannot and will not come to the church as a religious institution. In Europe his grandfather very probably rebelled in hostility to the traditional religion, and now the inheritance is one of bitterness toward the institution, and thick indifference toward the message of the church. In America, while the bitterness is lacking, our culture and those molded by it are basically just as secular. The current wave of religiosity only serves to hide this fact, providing a shellac to the shell of indifference which probably makes it a tougher nut for Christians to crack.

Again it is easy enough for the church to pass quick judgment and have done with it. But this does not help much. Besides, there is a positive meaning here, evidence of God at work among us. Behind this virulent

<sup>1</sup> Morton, Ralph, *The Iona Community Story*, London: Lutterworth Press, 1957, p. 32.

secularism stand four centuries of a secularization which in part stems from the gospel in its Reformation expression. The Christian faith, according to the Protestant understanding, refuses to deify and to absolutize anything in this world. Consequently, such a faith secularizes the world, since Christianity is faith not in the world but in God. This process of secularization leads modern man toward maturity since it enables him to take responsibility for his own life and society. Thus it is a legitimate working out of the Christian view of life. Protestants do not believe that the church and clergymen should dominate all areas of life, since these other areas have their independent laws to which they must be true.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, whose life and writings have been vastly influential in this Lay Renaissance, spoke of the coming-of-age of Western civilization. Since men have increasingly found their own answers to problems in the areas of science, politics, and culture, so Bonhoeffer claimed, they have outgrown the childish need for the "God" of religion to provide stop-gap answers at the edges of human understanding.

One might better put it this way. The process of secularization, like the process of maturing, is a good one. Men are brought out of childish dependence upon an authoritative church and an authoritative, mysterious Father-God into a mature acceptance of responsibility and a mature faith in the God known in Christ Jesus. But secularism holds many modern men at the midpoint of adolescence, asserting dogmatically an autonomy that must indeed be experienced but refusing the final maturity which lies in giving up that autonomy in a personal, responsible, ultimate commitment. Thus secularization is a good process but secularism is an inadequate, half-baked position.

The special opportunity that presents itself to the Gospel in our day lies in the fact that the Gospel can help man to a successful issue of his struggle for maturity. Modern man has used his autonomy to seize the world for himself and hug it to his breast like a grand prize. But that is no indication that man has succeeded in his struggle for maturity, because it turns out to be exactly the opposite of what he has been striving for. Man's autonomy does not make him free and independent; it does not help him to realize his longing to be a lord of the world. On the contrary, it makes him a slave of the world, unfree, alienated from himself, "in bondage to the elements." This does not mean that man's striving for maturity has in itself been wrong: what was wrong about it was only the way in which man sought to achieve his goal. And right there is a special opportunity for the Gospel in our day: it can enable man to attain genuine maturity.<sup>2</sup>

In Bonhoeffer's terms then, the church must come to "speak in secular

<sup>2</sup> Zahrnt, Heinz, "Am Schnittpunkt," *Sonntagsblatt*, Feb. 23, 1958. Cf. similarly Friedrich Gogarten, *The Reality of Faith* (trans. by Carl Michalson and others, The Westminster Press, 1959).

terms of God." As a World Council study on evangelism declares: ". . . the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh and in the power of the Spirit is a 'secular' event, that is, an event in the world and for the world. . . . It is the task of evangelists to rediscover and to proclaim the Gospel in its specific, concrete, unique and 'secular' sense." The problem is to keep the gospel from appearing to be merely a "religious" word, to enable "the secular relevance of Christianity [to] become increasingly clear."<sup>3</sup> The lay centers of Europe have undertaken a number of interesting experiments in seeking to begin that difficult task for our age.

At the Sheffield Industrial Mission in England, Canon E. R. Wickham and his staff of seven clergymen go among factory workers at their tasks trying to bring Good News of a third dimension into lives that are lived in the flat world of two dimensions. They seek to develop "a secular understanding of the gospel" by cultivating concerned and imaginative service in this two-dimensional existence. After establishing contact with workers and managers on all levels of a steel plant they show helpful interest in on-the-job problems, developing groups and activities in which Christians combine with non-Christians to open wider vistas for workers, to improve working conditions, to provide good will in the co-operative enterprise of steel production. One of the best products of this Mission is the development of imaginative lay leadership among the industrial workers themselves.

In Wuerrttemberg the Evangelical Academy at Bad Boll undertakes campaigns which seek to build up community life and morale in the cities of that province. The Academy sends out a corps of specialists into a given city as a Billy Graham team might move in. However, in place of great evangelistic meetings this team conducts perhaps forty or more conferences in a fortnight, seeking to involve each resident three times—as a family man, as a citizen, and as a worker. Technical discussions take place within the fields of family life, cultural pursuits, political activity, industry, and hospitals. These secular matters are viewed from Christian perspectives.

Bad Boll leaders work from within a given factory to exert Christian influence. By making personal contacts and developing cells of dedicated men and women intent upon being Christians where they work, these leaders move into daily work situations where there are festering human relationships because of friction and bitterness and hostility. In one sizable

<sup>3</sup> Typed manuscript, "A Theology of Evangelism," World Council of Churches, Division of Studies, Department of Evangelism, May 1958, pp. 3, 10.

factory where a small group of Communists dominated the labor union, the slow permeation of Christian cells broke that control and raised the morale within the whole labor force.

## II

Having looked, then, at something of the problem involved in purposing "to serve the present age," let us look briefly at three facets of the strategy which is emerging within a Lay Renaissance intent upon this task.

The first point is simple and quickly made. Laymen are the major resource. This is not only a matter of sheer numbers. Laymen are at the right places; they are on the frontiers, potentially the church's shock troops. Throughout the week they are regularly found in the factory, behind the counter, at the office and in the bowling alleys, where they are part of the groups and associate with the people whom the church and its clergy are failing to win. And they are amateurs, these laymen, not professionals who are paid to speak the right word and do the proper deed for Christ. Nor is it primarily preaching that is needed in this matter. In our day Christ is shared more often through quietness than through much talk, more through a gesture of appreciation than through eloquent words, more through an understanding of the deep problems of wrongdoers than through passing moral judgments. A real Christian's unassuming presence in the actual working of modern life may prove the best attraction to his Lord. Evangelism today must first of all bring the church to people rather than people to the church. This is primarily the task of laymen.

The second facet of this strategy is simply the most natural expression of the Christian faith, the one acceptable program in the Christian ethic, namely, loving service to the neighbor. To reach secular modern men deeds of loving service are the only effective bridge. The Christian must become sincerely concerned about those common-life matters which interest secular men. He must be willing and able to serve the needs there made explicit. He must give of himself to his neighbors in modern society. Olov Hartman, Director of the Sigtuna Foundation in Sweden, asks that the church open the sluices for the needs of the world, urging in another metaphor that the gospel burn unsheltered, with open flames amid the currents of our time. Here without doubt is the secular relevance of the gospel—people who live for others. All this requires sacrifice, but that is no news to Christians. If Christ is to take form in the contemporary world, it will be because his followers have become cruciform in his name.

There is a third lesson in strategy to come from these lay centers.

The style of life demanded for this task of penetrating the present age must be a dialectic style of life; there must be movement into the common life and then purposeful retreat. Laymen with their weapons of loving service are the church's shock troops, its assault forces; the church must hurl these troops recklessly into every skirmish and battle in the issues that confront our society. It will not do to hold them secure within our own institutional programs. We have far too much "church-narcissism," too many religious activities in which church members become preoccupied with their own groups. This is good evidence that secularism has pervaded the churches themselves. Christians must push out into the workaday world in much more serious fashion.

But these laymen trying to fight Christ's battles out in the world will find it rough going; frontier fighting is always exhausting. Thus they will frequently need to withdraw to regroup and to develop their morale anew, to find fresh spiritual resource. Perhaps Sunday morning worship should serve this purpose. Actually much more is needed if men are to find an intense and sustaining fellowship where their concerns *in the world* —at daily work or on the political front—are shared and supported. Much more is needed if they are to develop a sturdy discipline, the precise skills, and the deeper grasp of their faith which are all essential for such skirmishes.

This means forming intimate cell groups within congregations, holding serious retreats and intense conferences for specialized groupings, such as a particular occupation. It means developing courses of study for laymen that are as well thought through and as demanding as clergy-training. Theological seminaries are just now starting to assess their responsibilities in the area of lay training.

This double-pronged or dialectic strategy also requires that clergymen and theologians make themselves specialists in the various areas of the secular world, seeking to bring theological insights to bear on the technical problems that men face in our complex civilization. Similarly those Protestant laymen who are on one of the forefronts of secular human endeavor should be led into the resources of their faith and its theology on a scale thus far unmatched.

In this alternating style of life Sunday worship and the general programs of our congregations become the meeting and refreshment place halfway up the mountain, or they become the landing on the stairway, for people constantly moving beyond in *two* directions, in to retreat and out toward penetration of the world.

In summary, then, the church's task in serving the present age involves

at least three fresh undertakings: (1) to listen carefully to the age; (2) to penetrate into the common life and daily life; and (3) to evidence the secular relevance of the gospel. Such undertakings demand at least three points in strategy: (1) a new emphasis on the laymen in this workaday world; (2) stress upon deeds of loving and sacrificial service to this world's need; and (3) a dialectic style of life that continually moves into the world *and* into the resources of the faith.

### III

Obviously such a task is not merely a new program to be added to others in the organized church's life. The implications are much deeper and more radical than that. For one thing, this is nothing less than a demand for renewal of the church, for a new outbreak of the Holy Spirit among us. Here the Lay Renaissance, with its roots in the Laity Department of the World Council, reveals its kinship with the ecumenical movement which is expressing increasing concern for church renewal. In the second place, this involves a fresh understanding of what the church *is*. Let us turn to this question for the remainder of this article. What does our just-described understanding of the role or task or *purpose* of the church say about the *nature* of the church?

These lay-center leaders are saying most forcefully: The church is mission. Not that the church has a mission but that she is mission. Emil Brunner has said that the church exists by mission just as fire exists by burning. Hendrik Kraemer declares that mission and ministry "belong to the Church as breathing to the human body." In other words they define the church by her purpose in the world. This is biblical. And it is fruitful. When in ecumenical discussions Christology came to the forefront, it was soon noted that Christ was the one sent from God to a lost world, the Apostle of God, God's servant to the world. As with her Lord, so with herself the church is that body which God has sent to the world. We are not only the *communio sanctorum*, the communion of saints, but also the *communio apostolorum*, the communion of the sent.<sup>4</sup> The church is defined by her purpose because the Bible describes her Lord by his purpose.

Here is a penetrating judgment upon conventional Protestant theology. The Reformers, intent upon distinguishing a faithful church from a perverted church within Christendom, defined the church by the pure possession of Word and sacraments, sometimes adding proper discipline or polity.

<sup>4</sup> Thus in discussing apostolicity as a mark of the church, George Hendry, pointing to the tradition behind the traditions (à la Albert Outler), can insist that it is the apostolic mission that stands behind Catholic traditions of succession and Protestant traditions of confession. Cf. *The Ecumenical Era in Church and Society*, Edward J. Jurji, ed., Macmillan Company, 1959, p. 53.

But their definitions failed to take adequate notice of the church's purpose.

This is quite clear, for example, in the Augsburg Confession by which Lutherans define the church as "the congregation (or fellowship) of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught (or preached) and the Sacraments are rightly administered." From this are derived three important facts: (1) that the church is created or constituted by the Word, i.e. by Christ, by proclamation of the gospel; (2) that the church is in nature a fellowship, an assemblage, or congregation; and (3) that its marks are preaching and the sacraments. However, such an exposition fails to ask: What is the church's purpose? Thus we narrow and limit fatefully our understanding, and picture for the church a gathering of people on Sunday morning at eleven to listen to preaching and to receive the sacraments. Inevitably laymen tend to define *their* part in this church as showing up on Sunday and participating in worship by listening and eating (and singing and praying, of course).

But the purpose is missing here, and it is the purpose that defines the church. What purpose? Why, to proclaim the Word of God and to proclaim it to the world. It is a fellowship, all right, but a *proclamatory* fellowship. It gathers about the Word, but is at its best when all proclaim the Word to the world, not when one preaches and other believers listen. We must all hear the Word repeatedly. And some few are set apart to preach sermons. But we all, the whole People of God, are set apart to proclaim the Word to the world. Obviously this involves not simply words on Sunday but a lifetime of being and doing and speaking. Proof of the perversion in our teaching at this point is the fact that our laymen hardly have any idea how this is to be accomplished.

Very often we have distinguished the Reformation view from the sectarian view by stating that sectarians are intent upon finding the church's circumference in order to exclude those outside, whereas traditional Protestants define the church's center, preaching and sacraments, and include all who gather about these marks. We ought to reverse the direction of our definition to think of the church as those people who are moving out from preaching and sacraments, carrying the Word to the world. Any others who are in the vicinity are not of the true church. The true church is *in via*, on the way, defined by its outgoing direction. It is on a pilgrimage in at least three ways: to the end of time, i.e. to meet Christ at his Return; to the ends of the world, i.e. to bring the Word to all peoples; and to the end or purpose of the church, i.e. to carry redemption to the lost world.

What, then, is the church? It is a task force, an army on a mission,

the *milites Christi*, soldiers of Christ. That song, "Onward Christian Soldiers," often seems rather remote from the empirical church as we experience it. Halford Luccock comes closer when he paraphrases:

Like a mighty tortoise  
Moves the Church of God:  
Brothers, we are treading  
Where we always trod.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, "Onward Christian Soldiers" is a good watchword. Only we ought not to think of ourselves as medieval crusaders decked out in flashing armor, riding spirited chargers, marching proudly with banners flying. The modern world does not need a parade of righteousness. We ought rather to think of a modern task force, a squad of marines who are a team of technically trained specialists, astride complex equipment, dressed in camouflaged clothing, prepared to infiltrate the enemy and to strike suddenly for a limited victory and then to withdraw, leaving our dead and carrying our wounded in retreat.

And we should be clear that "the world" is not our enemy. It is the prize we seek. Satan and the hosts of darkness are our enemy. Christ is Lord, as the lay movement leaders frequently assert, over *this whole world*. Only the church fully recognizes the true Lord of this earthly domain. We are the forces of liberation, invading the Usurper's territory in the name of the rightful King. An invading army cannot sit on the beach. By its very nature it must push into the enemy lines, proclaiming the rightful Lord, making evident his rule, indeed, embodying his Lordship wherever hostility remains.

These lay center leaders put it perhaps more constructively when they insist that the church is by nature Partner to the World. As H. H. Walz puts it:

I rather think that from the very beginning Church and world are related to one another in such a way that theologically speaking neither could exist without the other. They have their very nature not in themselves but in their relationship. The history of the Church is the history of God's saving purpose and this purpose would really be purposeless if it were not directed toward the world. . . . the whole universe is envisaged in every particular act of the Church. . . . the Church is the *pars pro toto* in respect of the world. . . . The nature and the mission of the Church are one and the same thing, because . . . the Church is the incarnation of God's saving purpose for the world.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> "Simeon Stylites," *Christian Century*, May 20, 1957, p. 679.

<sup>6</sup> Walz, H. H., *Laymen's Work*, World Council of Churches, Geneva, No. 8, Special Issue, Spring 1955, pp. 7-9.

Another favorite way to express this idea is to define the church as the People of God. This Partner to the World is the People of God proclaiming to the world Christ's Lordship over that world. As a phrase "the People of God" stands for at least two things. In the first place it emphasizes that the church is *people*, not just religious activities—worship and programs—but *people*; nor yet just one aspect of life, a religious area, a soul turned toward God. The church is made up of whole people, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. When Christians eat or sleep or work, the church eats or sleeps or works.

In the second place the phrase "People of God" includes clergy and laity in one category. Laymen are full-fledged, one-hundred-per-cent churchmen. Here we must root out the deep-seated feeling that laity are second-class citizens, passive listeners to the Word, at best domesticated, clericalized helpers of the real churchmen, the clergy.

Not that there are no distinctions, but that the differences are functional, involving a division of labor. Some, the few, are the leaders of the community gathered in retreat. Others, the many, are the leaders of "the community of the dispersed." Their penetration of the world makes them scouts or guides on the frontiers of the church. Some preach the Word at the center of the Christian community; others proclaim that Word and are its demonstrators at the borders of the community and out in the world. Here is the dialectic style of life as basic in defining the church.

And here is the emphasis upon the role of laymen-in-the-world as crucial in defining not only the church's purpose but her very nature. Yet precisely at this point the church traditionally falters. Hendrik Kraemer has written an important book called *A Theology of the Laity* in which he uses much space pointing out that this has never really been done adequately. We do not have a theology which brings integrally into its balance an understanding of the church as laymen-in-the-world.

#### IV

What does this mean? We can only suggest quite briefly.

One way of putting it is this: laymen are and do for the world what clergymen are and do for the church. Clergy work where the Word is recognized and Christ's Lordship acknowledged. Laymen work where these are not explicitly known. Clergy work with things *directly* identified with God; laymen with things *indirectly* identified with God. Clergy work with the kingdom on the right hand; laymen with the kingdom on the left

hand, the secular spheres where some autonomy must prevail, the sphere of things transient and relative.

What kind of work does the layman do there? The same kind as the clergyman in his area. Kraemer speaks of mission and ministry, apostolate and diaconate, proclamation and service. Two biblical illustrations express it vividly—light and salt, being a priest *for* the world and being the church *in* the world.

The priest relates men and human activity to God. The laymen priests relate transient, secular things to God, just as a window pane admits light and relates a building to its larger setting. Over against the dense, stuffy seriousness of those who would make transient things ultimate, the Christian layman can open up, lighten, relativize. He can add humor; he can show that these things are not final, that there is something beyond. On the other hand, over against those who cynically devalue earthly pursuits, the Christian can make these things transparent to God's presence in them so that they are transfigured and shown in their true value as masks of God. Thus, the paper money of our modern world can be recognized as the coinage of the eternal, as George MacLeod puts it. Christian laymen are windows for the world.

Notice, however, that windows are part of the building; Christian laymen are fully *in* the world. Here the second illustration is better. Salt is useful by expending itself in the soup. In scattering and permeating it fulfills its ministry of savoring and preserving.

Someone has used another apt illustration: "The Church is the gauze which prevents the wound of the world from closing prematurely."<sup>7</sup> But the best illustration, of course, is the personal one, the divine one of the suffering servant who takes *their* wounds upon *himself*. Christian laymen are to be followers of Christ in the world. Christian love means *being for others*. This is the Christian ethic, the Christian life. This is the "secular relevance of the gospel." It is also the nature of the church in the world.

What are the true marks of this church-in-the-world? Battle scars are more telling evidence than battle ribbons. Not those who cry Lord, Lord, but those who do the works which he does. Receiving wounds is part of these works. These, then, are the marks: laymen bearing the world's wounds for Christ's sake. Ralph Morton of the Iona Community echoes Pascal in pointing out "that it was only in His wounds that men

<sup>7</sup> This quotation and the ideas of the preceding two paragraphs are drawn from the above-cited *Laymen's Work* by H. H. Walz, pp. 20ff.

touched the Risen Christ. The marks of the Church—His body—are the signs of love that men want to touch, to be sure that the body is alive.”<sup>8</sup> When the hymn writer asks: “Hath he marks to lead me to him, If he be my Guide?” his answer is: “In his feet and hands are wound prints, And his side.”

Traditionally Protestants point to preaching and sacraments as marks. These are the inner marks, visible only to the eyes of faith within the household of faith. When the Reformers sought to discern the true church within a corrupted Catholic household of faith, they fixed upon these inner signs. It took Protestants several centuries to recover the missionary aspect of the gospel. Now that Christians are obviously thrust into a missionary situation throughout the modern world, emphasis must be placed upon the marks of a missionary church, with meaning recognizable to secular observers, namely, suffering and love.

When Luther tells how one can find the true church in this world, he points to seven signs or marks: preaching, Baptism, Lord’s Supper, the keys, the ministry, prayer and public worship. Seventh, last but not least: “The holy, Christian Church is outwardly known by the holy possession of the Holy Cross. It must endure all hardships and persecution, all kinds of temptation and evil (as the Lord’s Prayer says) from devil, world, and flesh; it must be inwardly sad, timid, terrified; outwardly poor, despised, sick, weak; thus it becomes like its head, Christ. The reason must be only this—that it holds fast to Christ and God’s Word and thus suffers for Christ’s sake. . . . Where you can see or hear this, there know that the Holy Christian Church is.”<sup>9</sup> This is a theology of the cross and a theology of the layman-in-the-world.

<sup>8</sup> “The Marks of the Church,” *The Oracle*, March 1958, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Works of Martin Luther*, Philadelphia Edition, Vol. V, p. 286.

# Academic Community and Christian Community

RICHARD N. BENDER

## I

**A** WHOLE BODY, community, or guild of masters and scholars—*universitas magistrorum et scholarium*—so reads the classical definition of the university. To a greater or lesser degree, the academic community thinks of itself in these terms and aspires to this ideal.

The role assigned to the academic community in our culture is essentially this: to be at once a market place of ideas and a center of research, in which the accumulated wisdom of the past may be transmitted, and in which the values of an emerging culture are identified and patterns of human life adapted to them. The academic community is tangible evidence of the continuity of human culture with its problems, both recurring and changing. How appropriate to this role is the symbolism of the university president dressed in medieval academic regalia awarding a Ph.D. degree for nuclear research!

The academic community aspires to be a society held together by a common concern for education and all that term entails. On the part of the faculty this presupposes years of thorough study and research as background, continuing familiarity with the learned literature associated with a field of specialization, time for contemplation and class preparation, periodic publication of scholarly material. On the part of the student it is expected that he will come to the academic community having thoroughly mastered the knowledge and skills of his earlier educational experience, that he will be open-minded and strongly motivated to learn, that study and class attendance will consume the major part of his time and that all his other activities will be adjusted accordingly; that he knows how to read and loves books, that he will accept mature responsibility for his own behavior.

The virtues presupposed for all members of this kind of community

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are industry, integrity, love of truth, objectivity, open-mindedness, reasonableness, self-discipline, and temperance. Truly, the academic community as it conceives itself to be is unique in its dedication to a clearly defined purpose and peculiarly disciplined for the achievement of that purpose. The only difficulty, as you and I know, is that the academic community in fact is not very much like this.

For one thing, let us take a look at what really happens in the graduate preparation of many college teachers. What should be an authoritative report, and what certainly is a disturbing one, was released in 1957 after extensive investigation by the deans of four of the leading graduate schools of the nation. After underscoring weakness and inefficiency throughout graduate training, this report concludes:

The frequent result is depressing indeed, for we see many a man less mature, less self-poised, and less confident after two years in graduate school than he was as an unspired college senior. . . . Too many men emerge from the ordeal spiritually dried up. . . . The desire for finding out what had not been before known, the imaginative urge to reinterpret, these the tired and weary student has gradually lost. He has been wrung dry and, knowingly or not, he often finishes his thesis with the firm resolve to have no more to do with "scholarship."<sup>1</sup>

As the teacher moves to the community where he is to teach, we discover that for the most part (and contrary to popular stereotypes) he behaves like a very normal, if not too scholarly, human being. He enters with genuine enthusiasm into all the standard time-consuming distractions of home and family and community social life. He becomes a teacher of a church-school class; or sings in the church choir, or serves on the official board, or all three. He joins a civic club as an expression of interest in community affairs.

On the campus, he is at once appointed to four faculty committees, two of which, fortunately, do not meet. But the other two do meet for hours each semester. If one of them happens to be a committee on student social life, it may deliberate once each week for at least a month on the question of whether date hours on Friday and Saturday should end at 11:30 P. M. or midnight. If it is a scholarship committee, one of the most important items of business for the year may be whether to fine students \$2 or \$5 for each class missed the day before or the day after announced vacations. If the committee is one on curriculum, the new teacher will soon discover that additions to and deletions from the course offerings, or the adoption of new graduation requirements, are not determined by care-

<sup>1</sup> *Time*, November 25, 1957, 99.

ful evaluation according to a clearly defined statement of objectives. The really crucial questions will be much more practical in nature, such as: "If we add a course in dance decorations, will we attract more women students?" or "How many more hours of religion can we require for graduation without the science people demanding another required science course?"

There is little time left for class preparation or careful individual grading of term papers. Graduate lecture notes are called into service during the first semester, and thereafter are refreshed periodically with a quotation or two from a new book or a learned journal. A major student is employed to get the crucial but odious task of grading examinations out of the way as painlessly as possible.

As for research and publication: How can we expect scholarly writing from one whose life and time are supposedly dedicated to teaching?

Very often the teacher has only the vaguest possible sense of obligation toward the critical moral issues of the day, preferring a comfortable, safe, and completely irrelevant scholarly neutrality.

The facts about the student often deviate somewhat from the ideal also. Almost certainly it will be naïve to assume that the typical high-school graduate is intellectually or emotionally prepared for college. Neither will he be anxious to learn or interested in ideas. What the student will want most of all may be membership in a fraternity, a place on the football team, a husband, a passing grade, a convertible, or a degree. For a large number college will be a means to an end, with such study as is unavoidable classed as a necessary evil. Very often the end to which college is a means will be a respectable, well-paying, secure job. One student recognizing the utilitarian preoccupation of her student generation has written "The Students' Vocational Invocation":

Oh mute managerial Muses,  
Sitting stiff-lipped in committee,  
We don't ask to be  
Battered or fired,  
Seasoned or inspired;  
We don't seek wisdom's warmth;  
We just want,  
Each of us,  
A good job.<sup>2</sup>

Study and class attendance, far from consuming the principal part of the student's time, will for many be of minor and incidental importance.

<sup>2</sup> Cited by Jonathan Schwartz, *The Nation*, March 9, 1957, 211.

Some will live at home and commute to college, spending a minimum of time on campus, perhaps parts of four days a week, being in every way a part of a completely different kind of community. Some will hold down jobs, going to college "on the side." Of those who enroll in a residential college and do not take jobs, a large number will spend more time in automobiles and at bridge tables than in classroom, library, laboratory combined. Not only will many students never really have read a book, they will not be familiar enough with the English language to accomplish this task when expected to do so. As to mature responsibility for personal behavior, the student will perform in principle very like the adults in the community from which he has come (though perhaps his behavior will be less concealed and rationalized).

In and through all of this, the student can be expected to learn how to scan books without really reading any, how to reword published material so as to incorporate it in term papers without detection, how to use the right phrases and express the right views to satisfy his teachers; in short, how to graduate from college without any real encounter with scholarship, how to substitute appearance for integrity to accomplish a goal.

Deeply underlying these patterns of student life and thought and accounting for them to some extent, is the widespread conviction among students that contemporary life does not have meaning, and that the traditional answers—including the Christian answers—do not fit the questions. Writing in this vein in a recent issue of *The American Scholar*, Stanley J. Rowland, Jr., added:

One reaction is a kind of superficial cynicism, which is usually just that. More frequent are attitudes of noninvolvement; one does not commit himself, one may investigate but does not give himself to anything wholeheartedly, except perhaps a desire to carve out a nook "for the good life" amid rapid change. The young man goes steady, marries early, and wants security, pulling his gray flannel house down around his ears against the din of the social revolution sweeping the world. On the more thoughtful side, our age of consolidation is expressed in New Conservatism and a heightened interest in religion among students.<sup>3</sup>

This is the religion of adjustment and anesthesia.

The academic community in fact is neither whole nor a community. Its fragmentation has been the subject of many literary efforts. It is not dominated by a single, central purpose—nor indeed by several generally known and accepted purposes. Fulfillment of the role assigned to the

<sup>3</sup> Stanley J. Rowland, Jr., "Religion and the Younger Generation," *The American Scholar*, Summer, 1958, 304.

academic community would be most difficult under ideal circumstances. This difficulty is incredibly complicated by the irrelevancies with which academic life has been encrusted. Big-time football, fraternity social life, and faculty committees which invest major energies in academic trivia are only among the more obvious of these.

For better or for worse, it is in this community which is very human —therefore, an inconstant, short-sighted, sinful, devoted, self-sacrificing, redeemable community—that the enterprise of higher education must be carried on. While the above picture of its deficiencies may be slightly overdrawn, the academic community we know, in fact, misses the mark of the ideal by a wide margin. Yet it is nonetheless true that here, too, there is a “saving remnant.” There are some teachers who personify the ideal as scholars and teachers. There are some students who do come to college equipped to do serious work and who enter upon the task with a sense of vocation.

The academic community is destined to assume increasing importance in social and personal life. Despite frequent deviations and lagging zeal, its administration and faculty do return again and again to the responsibility of creating a context in which genuine education can occur. With all its limitations and accumulated irrelevancies, the academic community is yet mankind’s most hopeful effort to mobilize wisdom, knowledge, and skill in dealing with human problems.

## II

In ideal conception the Christian community is the brotherhood of those who are being redeemed by the love of God. To understand how the Christian community thinks of itself, one must understand the Christian concept of God, man, sin, and redemption. We can do no more than suggest in this context.

Oddly, however much Christian interpreters have disagreed about human freedom, they have unanimously asserted human responsibility. Indeed, the Christian holds that it is at the point of responsibility that man’s deepest problem is to be found. Man is responsible to love God, to live as if God lives, to cherish other men as children of God. Yet, though responsible so to live, man is unable to do so. Experience verifies on every hand (while theologians debate the rationale) that all men have failed in this responsibility, in short “have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” What we are dealing with here is neither ignorance nor finitude; it is a failure of the will itself, which has been made ill through man’s

devotion to evil. Ill at the very seat of deliberation and choice, man has within himself no sufficient capacity for healing. This is sin—failure to fulfill God's creation—deliberate, informed failure.

The only therapy for sin is love. In love God has acted to win man from depravity and to heal man's will. For the Christian, God's supreme efforts on man's behalf have been the revelation of himself in Jesus Christ and the creation of the Christian community as the living instrument through which God's love is available. We can love only as we are loved. Only God can love the unloving and the unlovable. Only the love of God can create and maintain the community within which therapy and salvation can be achieved. In such a community alone the unloving can be accepted on faith in what they may be.

But sooner or later we stumble across the disconcerting fact that the Christian community also is an all-too-human community. We who profess membership in it cannot avoid being especially aware of this. We know that the flash of spiritual insight is quickly embalmed in creeds. We know that the community's prophets often have been silenced by the orthodox—theological, political, social, or economic orthodoxy. We know that the effectiveness with which the community can move against bigotry and exploitation is limited by the most cloudy vision and faltering courage to be found in its midst. We know how irrelevant to the real social and economic issues of the day the concerns of the Christian community can be. We know how petty and trivial and tyrannical the members of the community can be toward one another.

Of course, the most devastating failure of the Christian community is the failure to love—hence a failure to be the Christian community at all! This has been its most recurring weakness. While Christian love entails personal and social action to relieve human suffering and to meet human need, the act can so easily become means to self-glorification, devoid of love.

The last temptation is the greatest treason:  
To do the right deed for the wrong reason.<sup>4</sup>

Further, there seems little correlation either between soundness of doctrine and the spirit of love. Indeed, sometimes the most pathological behavior has been perpetrated by persons whose theology was "sound as a rock." To cite examples of this would be to include many of the names associated with the main stream of Christian thought. And, human creatures that we are, we find it possible to believe that the most unloving acts can

<sup>4</sup> From *Murder in the Cathedral*, by T. S. Eliot, copyright, 1935, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

be relieved of some of their odium if they are at least based on sound doctrine. Thus, a properly respected scholar, in discussing recently the attitudes of the "Christian community" which was the setting for Hawthorne's novel, *The Scarlet Letter*, offered this startling apology: "The Puritan community in Hawthorne's novel was un-Christian in its unforgiving attitude and behavior—its bigotry and cruelty—but it was not un-Christian in its doctrine."<sup>5</sup>

As a mere pedestrian in theology, I confess that I did not find this observation very reassuring.

However, human though the Christian community is, wherever it really exists it is of God. His love is its center; his power to redeem persons is its power. Over and beyond all its sins and failures, its self-seeking, its pride, its human pettiness and irrelevance, the Christian community has at its best been the instrument of God's love in human affairs. Its ameliorative effect upon persons and society has been immeasurably significant. Again and again it has broken through creeds and ecclesiastical impedimenta, has risen above its own inherent weaknesses to be once again in fact the community of love. It is our faith that God will use the all-too-human Christian community in our time as he has used it before in the work of reconciliation.

### III

The academic community aspires to be a whole community of masters and scholars, engaged in the task of education. The Christian community conceives of itself as the brotherhood of those who are being redeemed by the love of God, hence the community through which the love of God finds expression in human experience. Both communities fail to exemplify these ideals in fact. Yet we shall not understand either unless we see them in the light of these ideals, knowing that each suffers from human failure. In our time there is a new and urgent interest in the possibility of constructive relationship between the two. Indeed, it is increasingly clear that each has need of the other.

The academic community is open today to the Christian community to an extent that has not been true for many years, certainly not before in this century. One of the most exciting facts of our day is the extent to which scholars of standing are involved in the re-examination of our culture from the perspective of the Christian faith. This is a halting and difficult

<sup>5</sup> Randall Stewart, *American Literature and Christian Doctrine*, 87. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1958.

process because of the ingrained predisposition to categorize all questions within the presuppositions of scientific rationalism. Yet the rethinking goes forward in the academic community, so much so that it has become common to speak of a faculty Christian movement, or more inclusively still a *university* Christian movement. Its ramifications are more far-reaching than even its participants themselves at first recognized. It calls for an entirely new concept of the vocation of the scholar, in which an acknowledged faith is an important element. The educational task is seen in new perspective as a quest for knowledge about God and man and their relationship.

Just as the obliteration of our religious heritage was foreshadowed a century or so ago in the universities, so a recovery of that heritage may now be heralded by rebirth in the universities. A mere return to the religious commitments of a bygone day, however, would be short-lived because it would be irrelevant. While we must build upon our heritage, we must live in the twentieth century and discover what the love of God can mean to human life in an atomic age. And we are desperately in need of new symbols and figures for the communication of such discovery.

There are many sincere educators who will look with disfavor upon any evidence of increased reciprocity between the academic community and the Christian community. They are convinced that both communities will suffer therefrom. It is my conviction that there are tangible benefits which can accrue to both. Among the possible benefits to the academic community I would list the following:

1. *A recovery of the sense of vocation*—of divine calling—in scholarship. The Christian community must witness to the claim of God upon the academic community; a claim upon its libraries; its laboratories; its scholars; and its students. God *calls* the academic community to special responsibility in our times. Thus there is rightly no secular higher education. All persons are God's persons. All truth is God's truth; all scholarship and skill are God's.

2. With recovery of the sense of calling will come a *new motivation* and a *revitalized integrity* in scholarship. To act with a conviction of God's presence is to act with urgency and to reject as unworthy all shoddiness and artificiality.

3. *The broadening of the scope of the educational enterprise* is now possible, since persistent human problems are now seen in new dimension—the divine-human dimension. The Christian affirmation offers new hypotheses regarding meaning and significance. It offers new categories

for taking hold of complex problems—categories such as sin, repentance, forgiveness, incarnation, grace, compassion, and redemption.

4. The presence of the Christian community may further promote the *clarification of purposes* through a knowledge of a common calling under the one God of all scholarship. Taken seriously, this kind of common commitment can serve as the criterion according to which many of the encrusted irrelevancies of academic life can be sloughed off. The Christian community may further focus and dramatize such common commitment by sponsoring a corporate worship experience.

5. When a scholarly community understands itself as acting under divine imperative, its *sense of social responsibility must of necessity be re-established and sharpened*. To take seriously the responsibility to live as if God lives, to cherish other persons as children of God, is to render untenable a stance of detached and irrelevant neutrality before pressing human problems.

The Christian community, too, stands to benefit from this relationship. This community has been at its worst when it has lost the capacity for self-criticism. It is with genuine insight that E. Harris Harbison has written:

Like every other religion, Christianity has been periodically plagued by its lunatic fringe of fanatics, obscurantists, and purveyors of superstition and fear. There never has been any really effective remedy against these people except the power of the mind, the patient efforts of an educated ministry. And one might argue that an educated ministry in any age is never any stronger than its few real scholars and seminal minds. It is they who carry out the top-level intellectual jobs which in the long run have much to do with determining the quality of the thinking and writing, the preaching and teaching, of any Christian generation. They study to purify the religious tradition itself, to relate it to the surrounding culture, and to take account of scientific discovery. They are never the motive power of Christianity; they are rather the governor on the driving shaft. To change the figure, their work gives the Christian religion its chance to grow in the surrounding culture. They cultivate the soil, prune away dead branches, and engraft fresh stock. God grants the growth.<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, the Christian community is in ever-increasing need for cultural leadership which is at once skilled and devout. If the community takes seriously its role as mediator of the love of God to a culture seeking to recover meaning and direction, this kind of leadership is indispensable. Even the highest motives will be frustrated in the complexities of modern life without technical competence.

<sup>6</sup> E. Harris Harbison, *The Christian Scholar in the Age of the Reformation*, Harper & Brothers, 1956, p. 169.

## IV

Now, despite all the mutual benefits a closer reciprocity promises for these two communities, two disturbing questions remain.

The first question is: Can these two communities ever be completely fused, and should they be? The Christian community is a community of faith and commitment. The academic community is a market place of ideas, in which constructive criticism and the objective spirit are virtues. Both are concerned with human improvement, and they do share other goals and other virtues. Yet there remains a deep-reaching irreconcilability about commitment and critical objectivity. There are esteemed colleagues who deny this; who maintain that the apparent dilemma is dissolved in a more comprehensive synthesis. I would fervently hope this may sometime be true. I do not believe that such synthesis is a current fact.

Certainly it helps not at all to hold, for instance, that all thinkers begin with some preconceptions and biases, and that as Christians we choose "good" biases as opposed to "bad" biases. I have an idea that it is a persistent uneasiness about this kind of question-begging that causes many scholars to feel that Christian commitment is not a legitimate goal of higher education, even while holding a deep appreciation for the content of the Christian faith. Even to recognize that complete objectivity in research is seldom possible is not to deny the value of striving for it. To recognize that whether Christian or not we do make value judgments about the content and meaning of any field of study is not to exempt those judgments from periodic critical re-examination in light of new data. To base the validity of the Christian affirmation on some kind of special information which is exempt from the usual rules of evidence appears to many honest minds to be a kind of special pleading which cannot be depended upon to advance the quest for truth.

It appears to me to be more accurate and more forthright to admit that at best there will always be a certain tension between the academic community and the Christian community. I believe this can be a creative tension, a productive dialectic, an ongoing dialogue between scholarship and faith.

The Christian scholar must live in this kind of creative tension, a citizen of both communities. He must not only witness to his faith: he must be the incarnation of the values which we as Christians claim for the alliance between the two communities. To live as if his were the faith of certainty, but to submit even his most cherished beliefs to searching criticism,

is his calling, and only in this kind of tension can he fulfill that calling. Integrity must be reflected in his work as scholar and as Christian. He will regard the Christian affirmation as a major fact of which the entire educational enterprise must take account. This affirmation does not reveal a metaphysics nor an epistemology. It does not afford data for scholarly research which are not available to other competent investigators. It does not bring infallible insight amidst the complexities of personal and social ethics. But it does expand the search for truth into the divine-human dimension and offers new categories for dealing with human problems.

When the Christian community lives in the midst of and includes within its brotherhood members of the academic community, the best in each of the communities will be brought to the fore. The product will be a veritable stream of young men and women who are competent, reasonable, awakened, responsible, reverent, and committed. The Christian community in the midst of the academic community makes it possible for the university to fulfill the role to which God calls it and for which the social order travails.

A second remaining question is nonetheless crucial, nonetheless disturbing: In light of the fact that neither the ideal academic community nor the ideal Christian community exists in fact, that both suffer from the ignorance, the finitude and the sinfulness of man, is it realistic to believe that these two can be so related as to obtain for each other and for society the values described?

The answer is not categorical.

It is observable that too often this does not happen. Too much of the time the Christian community is dominated by the weakest elements within it, to become petty, legalistic, anti-intellectual, querulous, and dishonest. The academic community, on its part, deifies its own contemporary methods, mistakes temporary hypotheses for final laws, arbitrarily delimits truth to scientific method, closes its eyes to the implications of its own vocation, and gives itself wholly to secular values.

The concerns underlying both of these questions, that of the relation between commitment and critical scholarship and that of the capacity of two human communities to transcend their weaknesses, can be satisfied in the creation of the community of Christian scholars. Not perfectly; Christians scholarly and otherwise have always fallen short of perfection. Yet the power of God is available when conditions are met. The Christian community within the university can be a community of concern, of dedication, of seeking, of transformation.

# Christians in Japan

EDUARD HEIMANN

## I

THE POSITION of Christians in Japan, to this observer, is something unique in a world which is not short of problems elsewhere either.

Imagine a country which had 260 years of unbroken peace (from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries). It is a unique case among the major countries of the world, a unique blessing, under the protection of which the Buddhist sense of repose, balance and delicacy could develop that pattern of life which is the Westerner's fascination and envy. He can never hope to adopt it, among other reasons because he has not learned, from childhood on, to sit on the floor and eat from a table a few inches high. A famous German architect, Bruno Taut, is frequently quoted by the Japanese as having said that theirs is the supreme combination of simplicity and elegance. The Chinese find the Japanese palaces small, and they are. But above all, they are empty; no heavy furniture blocks the view upon the proportions of the room, of the walls and windows, and of the light-colored mats that cover the floor. No door or window opens obliquely into the room so as to cut into those proportions; the walls consist of sliding doors and windows and of the closets in which the beddings are kept during the day. The garden may be small but is a poem of delicate and fresh beauty drawn into the room through the open doors and windows. One or two flowers in the vase in the corner of the room reveal all the glory of their species; no bouquet is needed. Houses, palaces and temples are of wood, and nails to connect the beams should be wooden; for wood is living and warm, stone and iron are cold and dead.

Emil Lederer<sup>1</sup> aptly characterizes the Japanese home in the saying

<sup>1</sup> An Austro-German economist who was a professor in Tokyo Imperial University in the twenties and, as Dean of The New School for Social Research, died in New York in 1939. His book (with Emy Lederer-Seidler), *Japan in Transition*, New Haven, 1938, is regarded as unsurpassed by the Japanese scholars.

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that it does not permit of table-pounding or of a loud word or of hasty motions, which might tear the walls. That is, it is not for dynamic Western persons reared in the dynamic tradition of their world; there is no room for tension and conflict; they are there, but they are not legitimate. The well-known symbol is the taking off of your shoes as you enter a home; the dirt of the street is left outside, and you walk inaudibly. The Westerner thinks of his home stuffed with all kinds of cherished things, heavy chairs, tables, beds, rugs, lamps, framed pictures, and regards Japan as a kind of irretrievably lost paradise of peace, delicacy, and repose. Or conversely, to the Japanese all Western people are barbarians, although courtesy does not allow them to suggest this. Indeed, Japan is far more highly civilized than we are.

Now the point is that this unique Japanese blessing, these two and one-half centuries of peace and all the delicate beauty they have produced, are the fruit of tyranny—a tyranny which shut the country off from all contacts with the outside world and mercilessly suppressed any dissension at home. The great St. Francis Xavier and his fellow Jesuits had converted hundreds of thousands to Catholicism—none were left, and the last 37,000 Christian men, women, and children were massacred in a final battle. Shipwrecked sailors were not permitted to land, they were beheaded. The wonderful gifts of the people, finding many outlets blocked, poured into those that were left open, the ones without political overtones. The internal structure of the country was frozen and sanctioned as far as possible at a time when peace turned the attention of the aristocratic warriors to a luxurious life and thus enabled the skill and industry of the townspeople to rise to higher levels of efficiency and well-being; this was not permitted to disturb the strict hierarchy of a knightly society resting on the peasant family, which in turn rested on the labor of the wife and mother. On the other hand, in order to keep the local princes in strict obedience, they were forced to leave their wives or children at the Tokugawa Court as hostages. Zen Buddhism for the knights, and a popular mixture of Buddhism and the native Shinto cult of the family and ancestors for the common people—these provided the spiritual sanction.

And then, in 1853, came the great shock. American gunboats under Commander Perry entered Tokyo Bay and demanded an end to the killing of sailors and the establishing of normal trade and diplomatic relations. After fifteen years the shock produced a new regime under the young Emperor Meiji, who was to reign for forty-five years and to preside over a complete overhauling of the traditional structure as far as this was

necessary for the acquisition of all modern means of power. Imperial Germany with its shining military establishment in the center, its expansionist modern industry to arm and finance it, its efficient school system to train the people, and its authoritarian nationalism to support the whole structure, eventually served as an apt model and was diligently studied and followed. From then on the story is familiar: the fantastic career of conquests and annexations, which overwhelmed first Korea, then Manchuria, then the more populous half of gigantic China, and finally the whole of Southeast Asia, and which came to an abrupt end when another American commander entered Tokyo Bay in 1945.

The inheritance from the past is dual: the catastrophe of the imperialist program, and the unresolved conflict between modern Japan and traditional Japan. One may say that Japan is the unfortunate place where East and West, the twain, do actually meet. The Meiji program had envisioned a strictly planned society and economy geared to the acquisition of power and anxiously preserving the traditional loyalties which the rationalist methods of modern industrial life tend to corrode. Paradoxically or not, it is the old authoritarian structure which had secured peace and beauty under tyranny, and it is modernization which served imperialism and used the traditional loyalties for the new ends. If the imperialism is to be undone, the modernization cannot be undone. The answer that the MacArthur administration found to the problem was to extend the modernization into liberalism and democracy: the broad masses which have to bear the brunt of the national disaster would strive for welfare rather than for empire. The present emperor himself, devoted to and competent in biological studies and loath to undertake political adventure, is by his traditional authority an important ally to such a program, even though he keeps aloof from any discussion. On the other hand, his de-deification, proclaimed by himself, worries many who wonder whether the national cohesion can survive without a superhuman point of reference.

But it all sounds far easier than it is. The record of the MacArthur administration in strictly avoiding any pomp, parading, or other humiliation, anxiously building up the broken country, making reconciliation the supreme goal of its policies, and pursuing them with wisdom and integrity is probably unique in the annals of victory.<sup>2</sup> It achieved much, it could not achieve everything. The land reform is here to stay, and the Japanese scholars are at one in recognizing the social and economic gain it has brought

<sup>2</sup> There is one stain on that record: the execution as a war criminal of Marshal Yamashita, the last Japanese commander in the Philippines. Cf. A. Frank Reel, *The Case of General Yamashita*, 1949.

to the most oppressed class of traditional Japan. Far more dubious is the result of the reforms concerning labor relations and the industrial structure. What can labor unions achieve in a country where the overwhelming majority of industrial plants are quite small and where the family, however poor, automatically receives and supports a member who is underpaid or unemployed? How can you break up concentrations of industrial and commercial power in a country where both the tradition of managerial ability and the funds for large-scale investments are found exclusively in a narrowly limited group of family concerns, so that the newly appointed officials go straight to the expropriated magnates for private advice? This is the result of the Japanese planned economy; it has strongly developed a few heavy and related industries, but the bulk of economic activities are kept within the old mold, and the people embedded in the traditional social units.

This compartmentalization is visible everywhere. Fascinated by nineteenth-century Western industry, Japan has taken over its most barbarous tastes; the two big modern centers, Tokyo and Osaka, must be among the ugliest cities of the world. Contrariwise, Kyoto, the classical city in the lovely setting of her green mountains, seems to incorporate everything that the Westerner admires in Japanese life and art. In all the cities people wear Western dress in the streets and offices; upon coming home they change to the kimono, which in the countryside is the normal dress anyway. At international gatherings the Japanese greet Western visitors with the casual gestures the Westerners use among themselves; but the other Japanese they greet with the deep and prolonged bow which we may find funny but which is part of their exquisite code of feudal courtesy. All this means that the cleft between the two compartments runs right through every Japanese, however emancipated. A highly competent observer speaks of Japan's schizophrenic culture.

This is Japan's problem. Military disaster, with the old imperial-aristocratic regime badly discredited; brilliant industrial developments on the basis of extremely low wages; weak labor unions and limited efficiency of labor legislation, and more fundamentally than all this, the unresolved conflict between time-honored loyalties and modern rationalist methods—all these serve as powerful arguments for Marxist propaganda. (Hiroshima-Nagasaki and the cutting off of Japan from its Chinese market work the same way.) The country is hopelessly divided between tradition and reason, between past and future—since, with ninety million people and one more

million every year, we cannot go back, let us make a clean sweep of everything irrational. No wonder Marxism has a strong appeal among the intellectuals, particularly in the universities, and its propaganda is a temptation for the urban masses.

## II

What is the place of the Christians in this picture? Since the Meiji regime opened the country, missionaries were admitted again. Speaking in terms of statistics, the fruit of their labors was depressingly meager. After almost a century there are about 500,000 Christians in Japan, one-half of one per cent, about evenly divided between Catholics and Protestants, who have little contact except on the local level. Even within Protestantism there is less solidarity than one might expect. From the "United Church of Christ in Japan" (Kyodan), headed now by unexceptionable men, both the Episcopal and the Lutheran Churches keep aloof, and it is surprising to come across the Southern Baptist Church!

The Kyodan was established during the war under the pressure of the government, which desired centralization to facilitate supervision and control. The dissident churches thus had excellent reasons to pull out after 1945. But this is another day, and this observer for one is unable to say to what extent the weight of tradition and of established positions and interests may contribute to continuing a division which has no justification in the present political setup in Japan. And it does not seem sensible to export to a completely innocent non-Christian country the denominational dissensions that, while of overwhelming significance in the past history of Christian piety, are strictly cut across by present theological discussion. It is only fair to add that there is unstinting co-operation on major projects, and that one runs into the most admirable people among missionaries and teachers. But the division cannot fail to puzzle and confuse outsiders and hamper authentic missionary work.

After all this is said, however, there is so much the more reason to be amazed at the place of this handful of Christians in Japan's life. The last Speaker of the Lower (more powerful) House of Parliament is a Christian. So are the Chief Tutor of the Crown Prince and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, as is the Mayor of the traditional and orthodox city of Kyoto. I have no figures, but I am under the impression that well over ten per cent of all professors in all the universities are Christians. (Characteristically I have never heard it said of any public figure that he is a Presbyterian or Episcopalian; he is just a Christian.) There are, in addition

to the Union Theological Seminary in Tokyo, several Christian universities and colleges, whose student populations are largely non-Christian and are not put under any pressure; the academic standing of these institutions is attested by their popularity in a country so deeply devoted to learning. In the non-Christian universities the Christian professors are known as such.

A sprinkling of American and European professors is found everywhere, but more in the Christian universities; the theologians among them often came to Japan as missionaries. Of these Western missionaries it may be said that the requirements of their work are very different from those in other countries. They all and their families are in love with Japanese life to the point of alienation from their home countries; their work, on the other hand, in so sophisticated a country is most exacting in intellectual and spiritual terms. Of course, as everywhere else, missionary work is more and more transferred to native hands, and the foreign contingent is shrinking; financial dependence still remains strong. But the main point is that, whether Japanese or foreigners, Christians are constantly exposed to attention, and they know it.

This is not desirable in every respect. Christian churches are, almost without exception, of stucco and wood construction and present themselves as pitiable imitations of Gothic churches with Gothic steeples; that is, they are conspicuous by outlandish and ugly appearance in the midst of the Japanese environment. I have seen a highly original Catholic church of foreign but impressive appearance, and two small Episcopal churches Japanese style—quite expensive, all three of them, and accordingly greeting the visitor with tablets in honor of the donors both Japanese and foreign. Such things, unavoidable for quite a while, are symbolic of the position of the Christians in Japan and cannot fail to make it more difficult.

The most telling story, however, about both the difficulty and the promise of Christian work in Japan is that of several women walking in the street and being overheard as discussing what became of some girls of their acquaintance; upon learning that one of the girls has married a Christian they all exclaim, "How happy she must be!" The woman, wife, mother is the beast of burden in the traditional Japanese setup; the film, *Rice*, teaches that in a moving way. Also she does not sit at table with her husband; she serves him and his guests on her knees, and she trims him up for the Geisha party. Children look happy in Japan and are treated with much care and respect; young office girls look happy, too; women look wornout and depressed. Marriage to a Christian, hence, is a social upgrade. Or inversely, Christianity, however pietistic and otherworldly it

may intend to be, is subversive in essence; it undermines traditional Japanese society.

The story tells us still more. It tells us that a vague rumor of what Christians stand for, and an influence that issues from them, spread far beyond the ranks of the believers. This, obviously, is one aspect of the utterly unproportional part they play in public life and education; people often seem to trust a Christian more than a non-Christian. Some surprising knowledge of Scriptural passages or stories is reported to be found in remote villages; Bibles are hidden there—they are hidden because people cannot dare to come out into the open with their sympathy, much less be baptized. The greater the subterranean subversive influence, the greater must be the resistance. Nothing like the catastrophe of the seventeenth century need be feared in the present setting of the country and the world, but the tension around Christianity is unmistakable. It is only fair to add that relations with Buddhist universities and monasteries seem to be limited but pleasant, with mutual invitations extended to renowned teachers; Buddhist theology is much respected by Christian students, while political and social ethics, naturally, hardly exist. Sociologically, then, Christianity with its intellectual and literary requirements is a distinctly liberal urban upper-class movement and must arouse bitter opposition among the upper-class beneficiaries of the traditional setup and all those who cherish that tradition as an integral whole.

### III

Indeed, Christians are a subversive force in Japan but they are not Marxists. What they seek is not utopia but reconciliation. From a different angle: they do not seek the past, which is man's, but the open future, which is God's. For utopia can be conceived and described only in terms of that which is known as a whole, that is, the past; it presents itself partly as an elongation of known elements and partly as a reversal or changed combination of such elements, but its derivation from the known past always remains recognizable. If this is true of utopia in general, how much truer is it of the Marxist scientific utopia, which, one hundred years old, is the elongation and modification of a one-hundred-years-old past in West Europe, reversing the old class structure with its individualism at the top and its collectivism at the bottom and inaugurating, by the all-inclusiveness of the new collectivism, the age of harmony and justice forever. This then claims to be the final achievement of mankind, to be imposed upon Japan as elsewhere in order to shorten transitional sufferings,

sweep away Japan's schizophrenic irrationalism, and establish the final kingdom of reason. For there cannot be anything essentially new beyond fully developed scientific reason—this is the utopia.

But the claim to finality is fundamentally refuted by the reaction of the West in accepting the bitter criticism of its disorder and injustice, thereby making Marxism the corrective element in the West's social life, and reforming its own structure—with the result that the revolutionary menace was averted from all the developed industrial countries of its origin and pushed off to the pre-industrial countries, Russia and China, and why not to half-industrial Japan? That Western achievement is history, creative history beyond utopia, Christian human freedom beyond Marxist causal necessity, the open horizon beyond the closed system. The fact that Marxists flatly deny one hundred years of Western history and stick to their earlier diagnosis and prognosis clinches the point: the system is closed, so history must be closed.

To the Christian, history is open. He is not the master of history, his is not the last word in history. The structure in which he tries to achieve reconciliation of opposing claims will give rise, in turn, to unprecedented and unpredicted problems, which his children will have to tackle. His ambition is to help—that is all. He is a conservative who knows that in order to preserve he has to reform lest there be either an explosion or atrophy. Reform does not give history its final form; reform simply helps it to go on, gives it a chance, keeps it open. It is not inspired by the claim to supreme knowledge but by love that tries to understand.

The Japanese reformer realizes that the traditional structure, however antiquated, could never have lived and borne fruit without human virtues built into it, whose suppression would leave a fatal vacuum. Japan's emphasis upon loyalty between persons is something that rational education should not be permitted to corrode, as in the West. A closed ideology like that of Marxism is convenient; one has simply to impose it, cost what it may. Japan's Christians, free from ideology, but conscious of the cleft in Japan's pattern of life, are groping for a line of reconstruction which, by definition, cannot be found in any book, Marxist or Western. For it must be authentically Japanese, in the sense of responding to the experiences and sufferings of the people and of giving them hope; and it must, at the same time, be authentically Christian, in the sense that, while its work can never build a lasting city, it should be recognizable as an earnest of the city that is to come.

## Men—Not Monuments

KERMIT EBY

THIS IS MY ELEVENTH YEAR at the University of Chicago, four years longer than I ever stayed put before. At periodic intervals I am surprised, even now, to find myself a professor at a university which Robert Hutchins once described as "not a good university, simply the best." In less humble moments, however, I sometimes think my experience in other than academic worlds gives me standards of judgment which the purely academic man does not have.

For example, I once thought all Ph.D.'s were definitely brilliant; intellectual luminaries in the dark skies of mental mediocrity. Now, I think that Ph.D.'s are more often than not marks of persistence not unrelated to the ability of students to give their professors what they want. Perhaps this is a part of the vocationalism which makes a Ph.D. so necessary for those who aspire to college and university teaching. Therefore, recognizing this to be true, I sometimes encourage my students to earn their degrees as quickly and painlessly as possible, and then go about getting their education. In my more cynical moments I compare a Ph.D. to a card in Petrillo's union (musicians) and remark, "membership doesn't mean greater ability to play the flute, only more opportunities."

Increasingly, securing an education means specialization, and I do not believe in specialization. My bias is in favor of a liberal education in the humanities and social sciences, which demands that each individual develop his own intellectual synthesis. The educated man, I am convinced, is he who can select from the welter of conflicting philosophies one which is to him reasonable and true, and then defend it.

Furthermore, when I was in the field of labor organization, I preferred individuals who were not overly specialized. Given a knowledge of sources, the ability to organize knowledge, and the rarest of all qualities—the ability to exercise judgment—the individual can be specialized on the job. Actually, I found it comparatively easy to find Ph.D.'s who could count the milk bottles in Alequippa, Pennsylvania, and correlate them with milk consumption. The jobs that were hard to fill were those which demanded

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the more imaginative qualities. For example, good pamphleteers were almost impossible to find. Probably because pamphleteering demands intellectual integration, facility in expression, plus commitment.

Universities and colleges produce more "bricklayers" than writers. Their papers and theses are built by taking one fact from one book, another from a second, and still another from a third, and then reassembling them. When I find an exciting, creative writer, I am tempted to keep him locked up as a natural resource. Pamphleteering demands conviction—a willingness to take a position and defend it. Of course, the convinced cannot make objectivity an absolute. Nor—and I am convinced of this—can any honest man. Nevertheless, empiricism in the social sciences increasingly demands detachment. Increasingly, too, the statisticians are corrupting the study of man. To worshipers at the altar of science, in more and more professions, truth becomes a matter of evidence, not emotion. My bias is of course the opposite. Man is more, much more, than a decimal point; and subjective, indeed intuitive, truth is also valid. For example, I would ask my students to read mobility studies, and sample voting behavior; but I would insist they read Stendahl's *The Red and the Black* and Lincoln Steffens' *Autobiography*. And if they had more than one class with me, I would ask them to ride street cars and study man in his natural habitat.

I begin every quarter's teaching with a lecture called "A Confession of Bias," then follow it by overtly stating mine and asking any student who wishes to leave to feel free to do so. A few have! This is my more sophisticated understanding of "letting your yea be yea and your nay be nay." Because I believe in my own freedom to express my opinions I try to develop students who are willing to express theirs. Therefore, I insist on knowing each student. My philosophy is simple, and clearly stated: "A student is more important than a footnote." Believing this, my office door is always open. Almost without exception, I am on a personal rapport with my students. With many I am on a first-name basis. Status and titles do not bother me, for I am convinced that a respect based solely on degrees and titles is shallow indeed. This is the reason I am so troubled by the emphasis on externals now prevalent in modern Brethren and other former fellowship circles. In the clearest possible language I prefer Kermit Eby, man, rather than Kermit Eby, symbol. Always recognizing, I might add, how important symbols are to those so dependent on externals.

And again—I ask my students not to review a book but to carry on a conversation with the author. And what trouble so many have! To them the written word is truth, something to be accepted, not to be argued with;

and this is doubly so when the works become classics. My task, therefore, is cut out for me; I must teach a healthy irreverence to break the magic spell cast over all those who are inclined to believe that because it is in print it must necessarily be the truth. More than once students have asked me if I am trying to trick them into making a mistake. They just do not believe I want them to be intellectually free. Or, as they tell me, even here at Chicago, conformity not individualism is rewarded. However, by the end of the quarter most of them are convinced.

Also, instead of giving written exams, I ask each student to come to my office or home for an hour-and-a-half-long conversation. Of course, this takes energy, and to be frank, as I get older, more than I sometimes think I have. But my wife insists that if I am doing God's work, he will supply the energy.

In a sense I have come full cycle. I began in a world of the face-to-face ethic and am ending the same way. During the twenty-five-year interval mine was the world of pamphlet and committee. But before someone too hastily assumes I have abandoned organizational responsibility, I must assert that my chief intellectual preoccupation is determining how to give meaning to the Judeo-Christian ethic, a face-to-face ethic and one which nurtured me in face-to-face relationships in a world increasingly complex and with decision ever farther removed. Also in the world of politics and power I *affirm man*, insisting that it is not that I am so good but that some are so awful! But enough of this. I am only doing what I believe to be the greatest necessity of our era—*affirming man*—protesting, and protesting forever that man, imaginative and creative, is more important than any system. Actually, there are times when I think system is becoming more and more man's enemy.

And now, let me illustrate by citing examples from my experience as a circuit rider in the ranks of the ministry. Time and again, probably because I am outside the bureaucratic structure and have a bit of a reputation for intellectual nonconformity, ministers pour out their doubts to me. "I so wanted to be a prophet! The ministry was once a calling, a dedication, and now it has become a routine. Housekeeping takes all my time. I am forever involved in teas and budgets. I haven't time to read or study. My sermons are uninspired. In order to get along, to support my hostages to fortune, I must conform." And yet another: "Why, oh why, is it so much easier to get a big pile of masonry built than a staff to operate it? Air conditioners instead of educational directors; kitchens nicely furnished instead of competent secretaries; *monuments* instead of *men*."

And what I have heard said about bishops and headquarters would be heresy if repeated. There is smoldering resentment against the everlasting superimposition of special days and special materials. "When, oh when," one minister said, "will there be a Sunday all my own?"

To these my reply is always that "*men*" are more important than *monuments*, and if you believe it, you must affirm your belief by behaving as if you did, even though you cease being a good organizational man. The first step in recapturing your freedom is to be willing to behave as if losing your security made no difference."

Perhaps the time has arrived to assert that all men who wish to be free to speak their minds should know how to use their hands. Why shouldn't intellectuals learn a trade? And perhaps our Brethren-Mennonite farmer-ministers, whose living was independent of their brethren, had an advantage in that their bread and butter was not threatened! I am sure that the rabbis of earlier times who worked as they taught were freer men than their modern descendants, and most certainly their parables were more relevant. Nor is it an accident that the most charismatic men in America are to be found in Negro pulpits. These are times when I am convinced that the farmer-ministers of fifty years ago preached more relevant sermons than the theologically abstracted ones with present-day seminary training.

But enough! Before I make more enemies. On the other hand, why worry? The illustrations my grandfather used grew out of his world, but his world has passed. Today, we are more and more being assimilated into the industrial matrix. Our soil is the city. And, may I add, a soil which historical Protestantism has not learned to cultivate. Protestantism, as I know it, is suburban. Its God is a Rotarian, and many of its ministers are at home in gray flannel suits and know how to use the promoter's language. The soil I speak of, the city heartland, is being cultivated by Jehovah's Witnesses and Pentecostal churches. Perhaps this is to be expected, since there are those who argue that institutions, like men, rise and live their day. Nevertheless, I wish the Brethren Seminary<sup>1</sup> would remain where it belongs instead of moving to some suburban paradise. For at present Bethany is located where the world we are called upon to save is just outside the door. But it may be that we, too, prefer salesmen to saints!

Probably what I am insisting on for others is a reaffirmation that the ultimate loyalties of every minister must be to commitment, not to system. Or to concretize, I always found it easy to work for an organization when my loyalty was to a vision of the Kingdom, which transcended my loyalty

<sup>1</sup> A Seminary now located at 3435 S. Van Buren Street, Chicago.

to men in a power structure. Incidentally, it is exactly here where corruption enters the labor movement, for it is here where the union ceases to be a movement, and the dominant motive becomes gain instead of service. And I suppose here is where religion becomes religiosity and secularism transcends dedication.

Everything that I have written up to now can be expressed in a reaffirmation of my belief that "ultimate moral choices are personal." Again to illustrate: I could write an entire book explaining the social conditions which produced Dave Beck, insisting as I do, that he is the true result of the business mores which produced him. Nevertheless he is guilty of theft, and doubly guilty, because unions are service, not business, institutions. Nor are churches precisely community centers, or physical education plants, or even kitchens. They are religious institutions dedicated to answering the important questions of man's nature and destiny.

I am, therefore, not only *affirming man*, but a particular kind of man, an inner-directed man, a man with a built-in plumb line, one who is conscious of the necessities of compromise, but who is also wise enough to understand that a man who is a man at all must at some time stand outside of compromise, outside of history. Here is the point where education is as much of the heart as of the head.

For those who wish to have a clearer picture of what I mean, I would suggest reading the history of the American soldiers who defected to the Communists in Korea, as reported in the *New Yorker*. If there is any moral in the story it is that many of these were men who felt no responsibility to their fellow man because they had no clear image of what being a man meant. To me, this is stark tragedy, for I am interested in the heroic, in man who transcends even what is expected of him. Perhaps this is why I am forever asking who our cultural heroes are and what dragons they fight. Or, to put it in other words, the Bible is a great book because its concerns are all noble concerns and its heroes are worth emulating. If I had my way every child would have as many pictures of its heroes as I was fortunate enough to acquire. I am convinced that it was because of my concept of the heroic that four times in my life I was able to stand against system and *affirm man*. Twice I determined that to deny me the right to speak as I believed was to violate me, and twice I stood with man against the institutions that would violate him. To me, the ultimate travesty is the insistence by those who place system first, that a single man can be sacrificed for the good of history. It is only men who laugh, men who cry, men who are hurt, men who bleed.

And so I will go on, ever *affirming man*, insisting as a teacher that students should be inviolable, that it is my job to inspire and get out of the way—recognizing more often than not that if students fail, it is as much my failure as their own. To understand this, I must also come to know that I cannot excite unless I am excited, or ask others to believe if I am unwilling to believe.

And as a preacher I would go even further. I would bring the good news to whoever would listen. A new believer would ever receive priority over a new church. And of course I would go to those without a shepherd, not expect them to come to me. All this I would do because I believe in the incarnation, the Word becoming flesh.

Candidly, it is because I believe in man that I am happy when my students say they will remember me longer than they will remember what I taught. In this there is a great glory and also great risk. For I must ever remember that it is my task to free, not to dominate. Or it is because I am capable of loving that I must also be capable of setting free. In a sense I must both attract and repel at the same time. Just as the parents sooner or later must learn that to get their children back they must give them up. Only those who are willing to give up can be trusted to have.

This, then, is my conclusion. I *affirm man*. In so doing I affirm students not footnotes, believers not buildings. Man is not a statistic. Men are not even necessarily equal in strength or talent. But they are forever equal in essence, for they all bear the same dignity by the very nature of their creation.

## Religion and the Arts

### Charles Williams: A Novelist's Pilgrimage

PATRICIA MEYER SPACKS

IN THE HEADY TWENTIES, when literary success was almost insured by possession of an enthusiastic coterie, Charles Williams would have been more deeply appreciated. But he started writing novels only in 1930, and his coterie, although enthusiastic, has made little impression on the vast insensitive public which, for better or worse, is no longer much appealed to by literary special pleading—even when the pleaders are so distinguished as T. S. Eliot, C. S. Lewis, and Dorothy Sayers, all of whom were Williams' friends, all of whom have expressed in print their admiration for his writing.

Perhaps more than one bookish type, especially in America, has come to Williams through his study of Dante, *The Figure of Beatrice*, since it was so glorified by Miss Sayers in her own popular paper-bound translations of *The Inferno* and *Purgatory*, dedicated to Charles Williams as "The dead Master of the Affirmations." For Miss Sayers, and for related writers of religious fiction, Williams is something of *il miglior fabbro*.<sup>1</sup> He is an insistent teacher, a novelist with limited thematic repertoire but a limitless capacity for variation-on-theme. His fictional treatment of his Dantean inheritance affords a fascinating history of intensification in the handling of symbolic material. If Williams does not, after all, appeal (as his American publishers seem to feel he should) to the religious, the science-fiction devotees, the mystery addicts, he should certainly attract the attention of those interested in literary technique. His development as a novelist, through seven books published between 1930 and 1944, aside from all questions of thematic appeal or obscurity, reveals the growth and power of a committed literary imagination.

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<sup>1</sup> "The best poet"—used by Dante of Virgil.

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## I

The novels, conveniently, fall into three groups, and not until the last are we provided with a touchstone for earlier relative failure. *Descent Into Hell* and *All Hallows' Eve*, Williams' final works of fiction, possess tremendous visionary power. In them, for the first time, he seems to succeed in transforming the novel form into a medium suited to his purposes. Although these purposes are primarily theological, in a broad sense, rather than literary, their successful communication depends, of course, upon literary effectiveness—effectiveness attained ultimately by a brilliant fusion of form and content in the last two novels.

This fusion is achieved by a technique quite different from anything in Williams' earlier works of fiction. In the first place, the plot does not center, as in preceding books, on symbolic objects or on a symbolic event. Instead, a total vision, essentially the same in both cases, is the heart of these novels. It is an objectification of a point of view familiar in Williams, but more successful than any earlier realization because more complete and more complex. Moreover, the central vision is used as the starting point for demonstrated reflection on problems of conduct. These two elements determine the whole course of the novels: characters placed in a visionary world work out the ethical problems involved in that world. The result is that the novels have a quality of inevitability and of massiveness. With dreadful freedom of will men work out their destinies, and the significance of that working out extends far beyond the bounds of the novel.

In both novels, the objective correlative of Williams' cosmic view is the concept of two distinct worlds existing side by side. One is the ordinary world of everyday life, in which people produce plays and conduct courtships. The other is more complicated. It is, for one thing, a world of the dead. The action of *Descent Into Hell* takes place on Battle Hill, a spot rich in history, possessed by those who have died there; and in *All Hallows' Eve* the most important character is a dead woman. But the second world is not simply inhabited by ghosts: it is also a representation of that realm of terror always impinging upon human experience. C. S. Lewis has written of Williams, the man, "He was ready to accept as a revealed doctrine the proposition that existence is good: but added that it would never have occurred to him, unaided, to suspect this. . . . He never forgot the infinite menaces of life, the unremitting possibility of torture, maiming, madness, bereavement, and (over all) that economic insecurity which, as he said in *War in Heaven*, poisons our sorrows as well as modifying our joys."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Lewis, C. S., Preface to *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*, Oxford University Press, 1947, pp. xii-xiii.

The concept of coexistent worlds is partly an attempt to objectify this sense of the infinite menaces of life in conjunction with faith in the revealed doctrine of the goodness of existence. For the sub- or super-world, with all its horrors (and it is frequently and frightfully exploited, by practitioners of black magic in *All Hallows' Eve*, by self-centered and wicked men in *Descent Into Hell*), still contains the possibility of salvation. Through contact with this second world, human beings can achieve the great goods of wisdom and of perfect submission: "*la sua voluntate è nostra pace.*"<sup>3</sup>

Occasionally in these novels the ordinary world of every day seems solid enough that one can temporarily forget the existence of its counterpart. At other times, however, only the second world has reality. For Pauline, the central figure of *Descent Into Hell*, who from time to time, terribly, meets herself walking along the street—"The whole world was . . . a canvas printed with unreal figures, a curtain apt to roll up at any moment on one real figure."<sup>4</sup> Peter Stanhope, the playwright who helps her to solve her problem, does so primarily by demonstrating that in terror may exist salvation. When he speaks of "a terrible good," Pauline doubts whether the dreadful and terrifying can be good. "Yes, surely," Stanhope replies. "Are our tremors to measure the Omnipotence?"<sup>5</sup> Pauline, meeting the object of her terror, finds it to be good and achieves salvation; Wentworth, in the same novel, creates for himself a feminine projection of his ego, and finds damnation. Likewise, in *All Hallows' Eve*, two women killed at the same moment, existent consequently together in the second world, diverge in the use they attempt to make of their state; one finds damnation, the other, salvation. For the living and for the dead, the underworld ("under" in the sense that it is the unseen foundation of the apparent world) embodies both Hell and Purgatory, according to the choices made by each individual.

The technique of these novels derives almost entirely from their central idea, which determines the whole course of the plot. *Descent Into Hell*, for example, clearly Dantean in inspiration, almost Dantean in power, concerns itself with various sorts of descent into the Inferno. There is the descent of the damned, represented most importantly by Wentworth; that made for the salvation of others, like the Harrowing of Hell, in this case Stanhope's; and that of Dante himself, for wisdom and ultimate salvation—Pauline's. "When all's said and done there's only Zion or Gomorrah,"

<sup>3</sup> "His will is our peace."

<sup>4</sup> Williams, C., *Descent Into Hell*, Pellegrini & Cudahy, 1949, p. 18.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Stanhope remarks.<sup>6</sup> Wentworth chooses the sin of Gomorrah, complete self-absorption and the refusal of joy. Becoming more and more inextricably involved in his self-created succubus, he progresses in selfishness toward damnation until finally Pauline and Stanhope look upon his face and Stanhope remarks, "I think he has seen the Gorgon's head that was hidden from Dante in Dis."<sup>7</sup> "Those who look . . . on the head of the Gorgon in Dis, do not know, until Virgil has left them, on what they gaze,"<sup>8</sup> Williams tells us.

Wentworth's soul has followed the precise progression outlined in the analysis of *The Inferno* in *The Figure of Beatrice*: from lust to "indulgence of its own private appetites, no longer touched by a mutuality of love, and then to the inevitable hatred of other indulgences."<sup>9</sup> This hatred develops into anger, described by Williams as a hatred of things themselves, "a discontent with the sun, a withdrawal from the world of others to its own gurglings and bubblings."<sup>10</sup> So we see Wentworth, so withdrawn that he cannot exert himself even to correct a mistake in the shoulder-knots of the guard in Stanhope's play, so withdrawn that when Adela, the original object of his lust, collapses on his doorstep, he merely drags her to the street and leaves her. He comes thus to the City of Dis, looks on the Gorgon's head (despair, the ultimate Christian sin), and knows only after Virgil (intellectual power) finally leaves him, what he has seen. He suffers a rain of fire (the Dantean punishment for the violent against God, nature, or art, including Sodomites and presumably the sinners of Gomorrah as well), and discovers that all he gazes on is meaningless. Witnessing his damnation, we stare into the heart of the Inferno: this is the most terrifying of Williams' embodiments of horror. His descent has been, in a recurrent dream, down a rope.

He had believed that there would be for him a companion at the bottom of the rope who would satisfy him for ever, and now he was there at the bottom, and there was nothing but noises and visions which meant nothing. . . . If he only had hold of the rope still, he could perhaps climb out of this meaningless horror; at least, he could find some meaning and relation in it all . . . if he could get the rope he could climb past, or, with great shuddering, even through the horrible blotch, away out of this depth where anything might be anything, and was anything, for he did not know what it was. The rope was not there.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>9</sup> Williams, C., *The Figure of Beatrice*, London: Faber and Faber, 1953, p. 142.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Descent Into Hell*, p. 246f.

For Williams as for Dante, the damned were "those who had lost the good of intellect"; the ultimate damnation is that in which all becomes meaningless. In *All Hallows' Eve*, too, imbecility precedes damnation.

For Pauline, on the other hand, and for the already-dead Lester in *All Hallows' Eve*, the terror they encounter is meaningful rather than meaningless, and the progress through it to joy—to Zion rather than Gomorrah. Zion is the City of salvation: it implies discipline and fellowship rather than merely private beatitude. So the process of growth for both women is from selfishness to fellowship. Lester's significant choices are those in which she wills to help others; she aids the living Betty, too, toward salvation. Pauline's private hell has been the repeated vision of herself; Stanhope, by an act of will and faith, accepts her terror to be his own, and begins her salvation. He enunciates for her "the doctrine of substituted love," demonstration of which, in more or less subtle ways, dominates the two novels. What Stanhope advocates is a literal following of the biblical admonition, "Bear one another's burdens." As he bears Pauline's burden, she is enabled to accomplish the salvation of a long-dead ancestor, a Protestant martyr, and by extension, strangely, that of a poor workman who has committed suicide on the Hill. For all distinctions of time are finally obliterated, and Williams' vision of salvation is as compelling as his picture of damnation, and as concrete. Willing to save her ancestor, but unable to bring herself to do so, Pauline is saved herself by her long-feared *doppelgänger*, revealed as a figure of beauty and joy.

The glory of poetry could not outshine the clear glory of the certain fact, and not any poetry could hold as many meanings as the fact. One element co-ordinated original and translation; that element was joy. . . . She knew now that all acts of love are the measure of capacity for joy; its measure and its preparation, whether the joy comes or delays. . . . She only among all his children and descendants had run by a sacrifice of heart to ease and carry his agony. He blessed her, thinking her some angel, and in his blessing her aeternity was released to her, and down his blessing beatitude ran to greet her, a terrible good. [The emphasis now, of course, is on the "good" rather than, as earlier, on the "terrible."] The ends of the world were on them. He dead and she living were made one with peace. Her way was haunted no more.<sup>12</sup>

If hell is, says Williams, "it is a fact, and, therefore, a fact of joy."<sup>13</sup> Eliot, in his essay on Dante, comments that we cannot understand the inscription at Hell Gate: "*Justice moved my high Maker; what made me were the divine Power, the supreme Wisdom, and the primal Love*—

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 190-193.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

until we have ascended to the highest Heaven and returned."<sup>14</sup> Similarly, we cannot understand hell as a fact of joy until we have seen salvation attained through the descent into hell. But this is what the novel shows us; we come to the end of it, as to the end of *The Divine Comedy* itself, with a sense of broadened cosmic vision—and the broadening of vision depends in neither case upon our sharing the author's theological position.

The progress to salvation, the progress to damnation: these are the themes of Williams' novels, and, in the last and best of his works, the themes define the novels. There is no plot apart from these themes, no characterization apart from them, no action apart from them. The novels are not allegories, but they are exempla, given twentieth-century cogency and artistic power—power the product of passion and of vision.

## II

But such novels of power as *Descent Into Hell* and *All Hallows' Eve* are not easily achieved. The five novels which preceded them show us the author struggling toward a technique which will define his primary concerns without distracting from them. Williams' first two works of fiction, *War in Heaven* (1930) and *Many Dimensions* (1931), which use the same character, Sir Giles Tumulty, as a villain, are alike also in their general technique. At the center of each book is a symbolic object: the Holy Grail in *War in Heaven*, an Eastern stone of mystical powers in its successor. The action in both cases consists on the physical level of elaborate and improbable cops-and-robbers chases (at one point—an indication of the improbabilities—a villain, after going to considerable trouble to steal the Grail, tosses it onto a shelf in a bathroom so it can be readily discovered by its rightful owner); on the metaphysical level it is almost equally improbable in its use of vague mystical hocus-pocus. Characters are arbitrarily brought together; problems are arbitrarily solved: in *War in Heaven*, for example, Prester John appears as a convenient *deus ex machina* only half-way through the novel, with no preparation. In neither book does a central vision dictate the form of the novel or dominate its structure. In both, however, some such vision frequently shines through and illuminates works rather obviously and mechanically constructed.

In these early novels, Williams' central perception of the nature of the universe, far from being dominant, is fragmented. *War in Heaven* contains two characters, the most vivid in the novel, who are vehicles of expression for the two sides of a vision essentially paradoxical. Most inter-

<sup>14</sup> Eliot, T. S., "Dante," *Selected Essays*, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1950, p. 206.

esting is Lionel Rackstraw, an employee of a publishing house, and one of the protagonists, who is alone here in a perception of the thin division between order and chaos in his personal universe. When he discovers a corpse in his office, he is hardly surprised: he has long realized that dreadful and unlikely things are perpetually on the verge of happening. Going home in the evening after the discovery, he yields to his obsession with "the spiritual malevolence of the world." "His usual sense of the fantastic and dangerous possibilities of life, a sense which dwelled persistently in a remote corner of his mind, never showing itself in full, but stirring in the absurd alarm which shook him if his wife were ever late for an appointment—this sense now escaped from his keeping and, instead of being too hidden, became too universal to be seized."<sup>15</sup> He wonders if his four-year-old son is some horrible prodigy, if his wife will poison him, and, finally, if "all food, and all other things also, were not in themselves poisonous. . . . Was there not in the nature of things some venom which nourished while it tormented?"<sup>16</sup>

And the imaginings which seem at the outset so fantastic, products of a neurotic mind, are essentially fulfilled before the end of the novel. None of the other attempted realizations of evil in the book have the power of the one which most directly involves Lionel Rackstraw, the one in which his universe topples and he feels his worst imaginings fulfilled. This is in a sense the spiritual center of the novel, as it is the spiritual center of Lionel's life, and of his wife's. As a device for regaining possession of the Grail, Gregory Persimmons, the chief villain, employs a magic salve to destroy Barbara Rackstraw's personality, to give the powers of evil dominion over her soul and cause her, in the process, unutterable suffering. The result of the application of this salve is to set up in Barbara an enormous struggle which cannot be fully resolved because her life has not previously been fully committed either to good or to evil. Persimmons, who has long since made the choice of evil, has previously used the salve on himself; for him it is a vehicle of release into complete communion with evil. Watching Barbara, he reflects: "In himself the ointment had been a means to a certain progress and return, but Barbara had no will to either and might, it seemed to him, exist forever in this divided anguish of war."<sup>17</sup>

The word, *war*, is significant here: this is the complete objectification, on the human level, of that eternal war which gives the book its title. For Lionel, however, its import is different: it is a final defeat rather than a war.

<sup>15</sup> Williams, C., *War in Heaven*, Pellegrini & Cudahy, 1949, p. 14.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

The phantoms of his mind were lost in the horrible and yet phantasmal evil that had befallen him; his worst dreams were, if not truer than they had always been—that they could not be—at least more effectual and more omnipotent. The last barricade which material things offered had fallen; the beloved was destroyed and the home of his repose broken open by the malice of invisible powers. . . . This unpredictable madness, without, so far as could be known, cause or explanation, this was the overwhelming of humanity by the spectral forces that mocked humanity.<sup>18</sup>

His fantasies are no truer than they have always been, because they could not be truer: they are merely fully realized. And this profound sense of the horror of human existence belongs to a man ranged on the side of good, not evil—but one who, like Williams himself, is fully conscious of the infinite menaces of life. The sense of those menaces, of the constant possibility that order may disintegrate around one, is more forcefully communicated than any other single insight in the novel. When it is considered in relation to its opposite, the point of view of the Archdeacon of Fardles, another major character, it suggests the direction of thought which was to become ever more important to Williams' novels.

For the Archdeacon, too, despite a slightly two-dimensional quality, rises by the strength of his conception above the level of somewhat unconvincing magic and improbable plotting of the rest of the book. He, the only member of the clergy represented, is less concerned than anyone else over the whereabouts of the Grail: he cannot believe that a mere symbol really matters so much. The deeper reason for his unconcern is that he, like Lionel, is possessed by a vision of the universe. When Persimmons suggests to him the possibility that a man may choose to follow evil, to defy and deny God forever, the Archdeacon answers *comfortably*: "You can defy and deny the air you breathe or the water you drink. But if you do you die."<sup>19</sup> He is comfortable because personally assured of a universe in which there is no possibility of ultimate evil. At the end of the book, when he appears to be completely subject to his fiendish enemies, he undergoes a crisis. "Now, as he faced his enemies, he felt the interior loss which had attacked him at other stages of his pilgrimage grow into a final overwhelming desolation. He said to himself again, as he so often said, 'This also is Thou,' for desolation as well as abundance was but a means of knowing That which was All."<sup>20</sup> All partial evil is, for the Archdeacon as for Pope, universal good.

The combination of these two visions—Rackstraw's conviction of the malignancy of the universe, the Archdeacon's belief that apparent malig-

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186f.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 272.

nancy is but part of ultimate perfection—provides precisely the defining elements in the concept of two co-existent worlds which came to be the center of Williams' novels. In this earliest and weakest of his works of fiction, the vision, divided between two men, seems self-contradictory rather than paradoxical. Moreover, there is a sense of holding back on both sides. The manifestations of evil in the novel, with the exception of the seizure of Lionel's wife, do not reflect adequately for the reader the true horror which Lionel's concept of the world communicates: they seem contrived and mechanical rather than genuine outcroppings of natural malignance. As for the Archdeacon, his conviction of the essential goodness of all things is not fully tested, either: his crisis is resolved not by the triumph of his outlook over his opponents', but by the convenient intervention of Prester John.

The two points of view, however, provide the starting point for the literary development which was to culminate in the two final novels dominated by the paradox. Both terms of that paradox, as we have seen, were ultimately powerfully communicated, with no holding back. On the one hand, the universe is a realm of constant and horrible threat, where evil waits to overwhelm us all, where apparent good is illusory—an Inferno, a Wasteland. On the other hand, the Wasteland is itself illusory, the goodness of God is all-encompassing, and the most sinister evil is but an aspect of it. Few authors since the Book of Job have succeeded in conveying so intensely the truth of both sides; and Williams' literary development was largely a process of learning how to convey these truths.

### III

That development took place in a series of leaps, rather than a gradual progression from novel to novel. Williams' second novel shares the faults and virtues of its predecessor, although it approaches more closely a union of consciousness in its central figure, Chloe Burnett. His third novel, however, *The Place of the Lion* (1931), demonstrates an entirely different—and at least potentially more fruitful—technique, continued in the next two books, *The Greater Trumps* (1932) and *Shadows of Ecstasy* (1933). In all three of these, some effort is made to symbolize directly and explicitly Williams' personal perception of the nature of the universe, so that this perception becomes more completely related to the structure of the work. The central symbols, however, are by no means engulfing: they focus the plots but do not determine them. Yet the success or failure of these books is directly tied to the degree of success of their central symbols.

Most effective of the three, although the earliest, is *The Place of the Lion*, in which a girl working on a Ph.D. in philosophy is transformed when the Platonic forms with which she has dealt theoretically suddenly become embodied physically in the world. The embodiments take the form of giant animals, ranging from a lion and a snake to a pterodactyl. Each animal represents the realization of some single quality: the lion is strength, the snake subtlety; and they call to themselves not only the animals corresponding to them physically (all butterflies become absorbed in the one Butterfly), but also the manifestations of the quality they represent (strength passes out of houses and walls as the Lion roams about).

The physical manifestations of these forms is made possible by the machinations of a man who is essentially evil in self-will, but they are not in themselves evil. They are, as a matter of fact, profoundly amoral—but “these also are Thou,” and their effects soon partake of the sort of moral ambiguity which was so dear to Williams. Anthony, the principal protagonist, says to Damaris, the Ph.D. candidate, in anger at her moral unawareness, “What you need very badly indeed is a thoroughly good Saracen invasion within the next fortnight.”<sup>21</sup> The equivalent for her of the Saracen invasion is the invasion of Forms, as fierce as any barbarians in their effects, yet working ultimately for good.

As he searches for an escaped lioness, a country doctor remarks, “Well, I’d rather laugh at the idea than the thing.”<sup>22</sup> He is, of course, entirely wrong: the Idea of a lion is nothing to laugh at. In the realization of Ideas in animal form, we see another manifestation of Williams’ constant vision of the abyss near which we walk. No single person in *The Place of the Lion* corresponds to Chloe Burnett or Lionel Rackstraw in a basic perception that we are always on the edge of chaos: but the entire book is a demonstration of this truth, in a way that neither of its predecessors is. The Saracen invasion of embodied forms opens up a whole realm of madness. “I’ll show you what’s silly,” says Anthony’s friend Quentin to him, “It isn’t us! It’s the world! The earth’s mad, didn’t you know? All mad underneath. It pretends to behave properly, like you and me, but really it’s as mad as we are! And now it’s beginning to break out.”<sup>23</sup> The greatest single achievement of *The Place of the Lion* is its horrifying communication of this sense of universal madness, which permeates the narrative far more completely than in Williams’ preceding novels. Here the symbolic embodi-

<sup>21</sup> Williams, C., *The Place of the Lion*, Pellegrini & Cudahy, p. 19.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

ments of potential chaos dominate the course of the novel almost completely: the mechanical plotting which marred the first two books has virtually disappeared. Moreover, the method of salvation suggested for escape from chaos itself intensifies our sense of the horror of that chaos. Anthony, who finds safety himself and ultimately makes it possible for others, does so under the aegis of the Eagle—the representation of balance and control. With the Eagle sitting on his shoulder, at the end he becomes a new Adam, and by naming the various creatures let loose in the world, asserts his control upon them. But it is a precarious matter at best. Standing on a staircase, Anthony finds himself suddenly on the edge of a great pit, steadied on the edge of a sheer cliff. Only by a tremendous effort of will can he keep himself from falling into it: the power needed to maintain balance is vast. So it is, as Williams says over and over, in our own world—it needs no alien invasion to tell us that. We can be saved only through balance—and at any time our wives may yield to insanity, our children become monstrous, our aim of healing the sick be suddenly revealed as destructive. Balance is the necessity, but it is a hard necessity; and once it is lost the pit always awaits us. The novelist's vision remains constant; despite the fact that good triumphs in this novel as before, that apparent evil is itself revealed as part of ultimate good (the manifestation of Forms, with all its horror, is a means of salvation), the vision of potential chaos and madness is more compelling than the promise of salvation from it.

Yet more powerful in its symbols is *The Greater Trumps*, in which a tarot pack of cards offers the key to the mysteries of the universe and is correlated with the activities of a constantly-moving set of golden "chessmen" whose images correspond to the images on the cards. Here, as George Every has pointed out, the symbols are too forceful for the story, which they largely destroy. The plot is improbable to the point of boredom, except when it is concerned directly with these symbols and their interpretation. The significantly-named Sybil is here the only representative of wisdom, although the young lovers, Nancy and Henry, and Henry's gypsy grandfather and great-aunt, all consider themselves wise enough to cope with the mystic powers of the universe. So Henry attempts to use them for the destruction of Nancy's father; and the cards are swept from his hands to let unrestrained power loose upon the world. The theme, then, of much of the novel is approximately the same as that of *The Place of the Lion*: the essential horror of cosmic forces, a fact which does not alter the equally important fact of their subservience to God. Horror is brought under control, here as in so many of the Williams' novels, by an act of perfect

submission: but this answer to a personal vision of the *Inferno* in no way lessens the hideousness of the vision.

*Shadows of Ecstasy*, although the last of this group, is in every way the poorest. Its failure comes primarily from the weakness of its central symbol, which is self-consciously used, but lacks the archetypal power of the giant animals and the mysterious cards. The embodiment of encroaching chaos in this work is an invasion from Africa, the Dark Continent, representing, as Williams clearly points out, the mysterious forces of the human subconscious. The attempt of the novelist here is to create a more universal sort of symbol than he has managed before. By the very nature of the conception, an effort is made to relate the characters and the action of the novel more integrally to its ideational center than ever before in Williams' fiction. But the symbol is not strong enough to bear the weight placed upon it. The weakness of *Shadows of Ecstasy* appears to be in plotting and characterization: one fails to believe in the action of the book, or in the people involved in that action. But the difficulty really lies in the fact that the idea of the invasion from Africa, which involves also the idea of the possibility of perpetual life, is not made compelling enough so that the characters can exist significantly only in relation to it. Their activity, consequently, seems contrived, and the attempted evocations of "the abyss" lack cogency. It is significant that in this book more than any other, Williams relies heavily on literary allusion for his effects: and "She comes, she comes, the sable throne behold/Of Night primeval and of Chaos old" does not substitute adequately for true communication of encroaching terror.

But all the way has been prepared for the final leap, which produced, after a four-year gap, *Descent Into Hell*, and, seven years later, *All Hallows' Eve*. That leap, as we have seen, resulted in Williams' novelistic triumph. It was a triumph long and arduously prepared for. Possessed from the beginning by a single vision, Williams had to learn how to communicate that vision successfully without violating the novel form, and, conversely, how to avoid the mechanical pitfalls of the novel. Eliot, in his introduction to *All Hallows' Eve*, observed: "Much of his work may appear to realize its form only imperfectly; but it is also true in a measure to say that Williams invented his own forms—or to say that no form, if he had obeyed all its conventional laws, could have been satisfactory for what he wanted to say."<sup>24</sup> The process by which Williams rose beyond debilitating conventions to make the novel serve his purposes seems a dual triumph—spiritual perception here, as in Dante, has found its handmaiden in art.

<sup>24</sup> Eliot, T. S., Introduction to C. Williams, *All Hallows' Eve*, Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1948, p. xiii.

# “The Riddle of Roman Catholicism”

A Review Article

WINTHROP S. HUDSON

## I

“A RIDDLE WRAPPED in a mystery inside an enigma.”

These words which Winston Churchill used to describe the Soviet Union, Jaroslav Pelikan utilizes to describe the puzzlement evoked among many non-Roman Americans when they are confronted by the Roman Catholic Church. Their response is not necessarily unfriendly, he suggests, but they are puzzled and mystified. Roman Catholicism is a riddle to them partly because it is strange and unfamiliar, having emerged only recently into a position of power and influence in American life. It is also a riddle partly because many false notions and uninformed opinions concerning Roman Catholicism have long enjoyed wide circulation. In a deeper sense it is a riddle because in many ways Roman Catholicism is a complex of opposites, a cluster of contradictions, a house with many mansions. Thus Roman Catholicism may mean one thing to one Roman Catholic and something quite different to another. And often, because many Roman Catholics are as ignorant of the implications of their faith as are many Protestants, it may mean something to them that is quite foreign to the intention of the Church.

In *The Riddle of Roman Catholicism*, Jaroslav Pelikan attempts not only to define the riddle but to fathom it, and he succeeds brilliantly in his endeavor. There is no other book that is as successful in presenting a full-orbed description of Roman Catholicism with fairness, accuracy, and insight. The author has been careful to take up one by one all the significant facets of Roman Catholicism—its locus of authority, its demand for obedience, its legalism, its political theory, its sacramental life, its official philosophy, its cultus, its Mariology, its folk piety. The result is a balanced and discerning analysis that is sympathetic and yet critical, appreciative and yet firmly grounded in a Reformation perspective.

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The book is addressed primarily to Protestants to help them understand Roman Catholicism and to enable them thereby to come to terms with the challenge it presents—a challenge to Protestants to listen and to learn that they may respond more fully to the summons to be responsible members of the church of Jesus Christ. But the book is also addressed to Roman Catholics in the hope that it may contribute to a more fruitful dialogue between the two branches of Western Christendom, for Roman Catholicism, the author insists, needs to listen to Protestantism quite as much as Protestantism needs to listen to Roman Catholicism.

There are three main divisions to the book. The purpose of Part I is to help the reader understand Roman Catholicism by tracing its historical development. Part II is devoted to an explication of the central features of Roman Catholicism as they are apprehended by Roman Catholics themselves, so that its essential genius may become apparent. The concluding section is concerned with the ecumenical problem, the relationship between the Roman Church and the rest of Christendom. The stress of the author is upon the necessity for Protestants to formulate a theological approach to their "separated brethren" and to develop a specific policy for reunion. The basic contention of this final section is that each generation of Protestants must rethink the decision of the sixteenth century. Only the Protestant, he insists, who has seriously considered the alternative of Roman Catholicism and, having considered it, has decided that to serve God he must remain where he is, can conscientiously remain a Protestant. Scattered throughout the sixteen chapters are answers to the various practical questions which are posed in the initial sentences of the book: What about a Roman Catholic President? the parochial school? birth control? divorce? those little statues on automobile dashboards?

## II

*The Riddle of Roman Catholicism* is such an excellent book that one hesitates to suggest that at certain points it might be improved, but one of the functions of a reviewer is to call attention to such matters. What may be a source of some confusion to the reader is the ambiguous way in which the term "Roman Catholicism" is sometimes used. Pelikan makes it clear that pre-Reformation Roman Catholicism is quite different from post-Reformation Roman Catholicism. While there is continuity between the two, there is also a marked discontinuity. As a result of the Reformation, the author points out, Rome canonized one current in the life of the Western Church in preference to all other currents and thus condemned part

of its own tradition. Pelikan also makes it clear that there has been a decisive reshaping of Roman Catholicism since 1850, so that modern Roman Catholicism cannot be readily equated with Roman Catholicism as it was defined by the Council of Trent. The confusion springs from the use of the one term to designate all three.

The author acknowledges that both modern Roman Catholicism and Protestantism are heirs of the pre-Reformation church, and he states that what made the Reformation "necessary" was "the loyalty of the reformers to the best and highest in Roman Catholic Christianity." But the Roman Catholicism to which they were loyal in terms of its "best" and "highest" is not the Roman Catholicism of today, although modern Roman Catholicism may have preserved some of the "best" and "highest" more effectively than Protestantism. It is true that it is difficult to avoid using the term in this ambiguous fashion, but at numerous points there would be added clarity had the author been more explicit and precise as to what Roman Catholicism it is to which he is referring.

A further ambiguity is involved in a failure to identify explicitly the essential characteristic of modern Roman Catholicism. Pelikan is rightly concerned to exhibit the many facets of modern Roman Catholicism, its varied character, and the way in which it operates on many different levels and embraces within itself many contradictory and opposing tendencies. This is part of its genius, but it does not spell out—in terms of emphasis—that which today makes one a Roman Catholic. Once to be a Roman Catholic meant to be in communion with Rome, a communion that in many ways was rather loosely defined. Later it meant to adhere to the formulations of the Council of Trent. Today it means a complete submission to the authority of the Bishop of Rome. Pelikan notes this concentration of authority—both theological and ecclesiastical—in the hands of the Roman Pontiff, and he points out that it reaches into every area of the individual Roman Catholic's life with its demand for obedience. But the weight of his emphasis tends to fall upon the diversity and, by implication, upon the freedom that is to be found within the Roman Church.

There is a degree of freedom within the Roman Church, and in certain areas of relative indifference it is quite an extensive freedom, but it is a freedom that exists only by sufferance. The significant fact would seem to be that since 1870 the reins have been progressively tightened so that it has become increasingly difficult even for the most sophisticated of theologians to carve out for themselves a modicum of elbow room in which they are free to respond to the leading of the Spirit of Christ as made known

to them either in their studies or in the practical problems of the life of mankind. A review of the past century would seem to indicate that Pelikan's hope that more liberal tendencies within the Roman Church may ultimately prevail is unduly sanguine, doubly so when he himself acknowledges that there is scant prospect of Thomism—to which Rome is far less committed than it is to the dogma of absolute papal authority and jurisdiction—being dethroned as the official philosophy of the Church.

The incidental references to the "folk piety" of modern Roman Catholicism are among the author's most perceptive observations. In terms of a balanced picture, however, he might have given more emphasis to this folk piety than he does. In many ways the pious practices associated with sacramentals of one sort and another, with the tabernacle devotion, and with what is frequently referred to as the cult of the Virgin, represent the real religion of most contemporary Roman Catholics. Pelikan points out that this folk piety to a very large extent has crowded out the sacramental life of the church. What he finds quite dismaying is the fact that "the theologians and bishops of the church, who ought to watch and to warn the faithful of the excesses of such piety, are actually the ones who encourage the excesses."<sup>1</sup> Even the Pope has warned the leaders of the liturgical movement that they must do nothing to interfere with or disparage the forms of popular devotion centering on Mary and the tabernacle. One is tempted to speculate concerning the significance of both the encouragement and the ready defense of this folk piety which serves to obscure the Christian faith even as it is defined by the Roman Church. Is the great virtue of this folk piety to be found in the fact that it renders the faithful much more passive and docile than would be true if they were to share in a more vital sacramental life within the church?

### III

The author's concern is not restricted to an understanding of Roman Catholicism. He is equally concerned that in understanding Roman Catholicism, Protestantism shall become aware of its own weaknesses and deficiencies and thus be led to recover those aspects of the full life of the church that it has neglected to its own impoverishment. Among the things which Protestantism can learn from Roman Catholicism is its urgent need for a comprehensive world view, an inclusive appeal, an urban ministry, a living tradition, a sacramental worship, and a policy for reunion. The last item indicates the author's further concern that Protestantism shall assume

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 140.

the burden of a ministry of reconciliation by seeking to restore unity to a divided church, recognizing that any concept of ecumenicity which does not include Rome within its horizon is something less than the full ecumenicity that is required. The Protestant approach to Rome must involve "gentle and firm testimony" to those facets of Christian truth which made the Reformation necessary in the first place, but it must also involve honest self-examination.

The author detects signs that many of the old issues which once separated Roman Catholics from Protestants and Protestants from Roman Catholics are now open to reconsideration in both camps, and he is able to identify many possible starting points for discussion. But he does not believe that anything more than informal conversations can take place at the present time, and he recognizes that the Roman understanding of the church will make it difficult and perhaps impossible for Roman Catholics to take any other position than simply to insist that Protestants return to the true faith and the true Church. But this lack of openness on the part of Roman Catholics, he insists, does not excuse Protestants from the responsibility to manifest their own concern for the total church of Christ.

The fact that not every Protestant will agree with Pelikan's delineation of what constitutes a truly catholic Christianity is little more than an indication of one of the essential characteristics of Protestantism. There are many, for example, who will not be willing to grant that a "threelfold ministry" is one of the "constitutive elements" of catholicity. And if catholicity is identity plus universality, there are many who would place the limits to universality which are necessary to preserve identity at a different point than does Pelikan. Some would suggest that the almost limitless inclusiveness which Pelikan seems to envisage would have no other consequence than to destroy the identity of the church. One may also question whether, due to our creatureliness and to the old Adam within even the best of us, any full unity can ever be achieved and whether it would be desirable if it could be temporarily attained. For the church would still wear the countenance of a sinner and would still stand in need of reformation, and yet it would be deprived of that necessary judgment and criticism which is always implicit in the fact of separation, and a new defection might then be needed to testify to the freedom of God and the lordship of Christ.

The nub of the difficulty which separates Protestants from Roman Catholics is to be found at the very point which unites them—their common faith in Christ. For it is their differing understanding of what God has

done for men in Christ that sets them apart. The Roman Catholic is possessed by an essentially utopian vision. He believes that God has willed that complete harmony shall prevail in all aspects of human existence. Unlike the Protestant who believes that there must be conflict and contradiction in this present world until the reconciliation of all things in God's final act of redemption, the Roman Catholic believes that Christ now rules the present world in the fullness of his power, that the ambiguities of human existence have been fully resolved, and that the remaining contradictions and conflicts can be eliminated by the proper ordering of life in accordance with his clear teaching. The notion that our understanding of God's revelation may be partial and even perverted, the notion that the oneness of the church may only imperfectly be made manifest, the notion that the church in any of its institutional forms stands under judgment, the notion that only proximate justice and harmony can be secured by various devices of checks and balances—all these are foreign to Roman Catholic thinking. And it is precisely from this utopian concept of the full harmony that God wills shall prevail in the present world that modern Roman Catholicism derives its insistence upon a descending hierarchical authority in the church, the state, the economic order, and the family; for in no other way—given the realities of human existence—can the necessary harmony and oneness be attained. If it cannot be achieved from within, then it must be imposed from without.

#### IV

There are four or five incidental points of fact or interpretation in the book which one might wish to question. It is highly doubtful that "according to official Roman doctrine, a bishop's powers belong to his episcopal office as such and are not merely delegated to him by the pope," so that he is "a little pope" in his own diocese.<sup>2</sup> This once was largely true, but the whole point of Chapter III of the Vatican Constitution of 1870 is that the papal jurisdiction over the faithful is immediate and direct and supersedes ordinary episcopal jurisdiction. Furthermore, in addition to papal confirmation of episcopal elections, a papal mandate is now necessary before election and consecration. The Vatican Council of 1870 did not "promulgate" the dogma of papal infallibility, the dogma was promulgated by Pius IX at and with the concurrence of the Vatican Council. The disintegration of Catholic Europe is not necessarily to be interpreted as the product of the Reformation; it would be equally defensible to regard it as the

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

product of papal rigidity and inflexibility. It is not quite accurate to say that, according to Catholic doctrine, the right to control the education of children belongs to both the parents and the church, for the right of the church supersedes that of the parents. Furthermore, in one stray sentence, Pelikan seems to accept the Roman Catholic rewriting of history with regard to the rise of democracy by suggesting that the emergence of a democratic ideology less hostile to Christianity than the French was subsequent to the French Revolution. But even were this true, it would not serve to excuse the blanket condemnations of democracy by the Roman church in the nineteenth century when there were numerous and vigorous states with a democratic ideology that could not be regarded as anti-Christian by anyone but a Roman Catholic.

These points of criticism are so minor and incidental as to be little more than mere quibbles, and they should not be interpreted as detracting in any significant fashion from the unusual insight and perception that is displayed on almost every page. The only real dissent that this reviewer would wish to register is with regard to the author's comments as to what consideration, if any, should be given to the fact that a candidate for political office is a Roman Catholic. Pelikan contends that

Membership in the Roman church does not disqualify, and it does not qualify, a man for public office. If he is qualified, I may vote for him, Roman Catholic or not; if he is not qualified, I should not vote for him even though both of us may be Roman Catholics. This is a general principle that deserves to be remembered and followed by the American electorate on both sides of the Congressional aisle and on both sides of the denominational divide.<sup>8</sup>

It is true that there are no religious tests imposed by the United States Constitution, and in this sense no Roman Catholic is disqualified for public office. But this is not what Pelikan means. He is suggesting that there is no such thing as a Roman Catholic vote and, by implication in the immediate context, that there is no Roman Catholic political philosophy. Actually there is a Roman Catholic political philosophy which Pelikan later describes, and then rather hopefully suggests that it may undergo change in a more democratic direction.

One might think that it is the better part of wisdom for a voter to inquire as to a candidate's political philosophy before casting one's ballot, and there is reason enough to regard any informed Roman Catholic's political philosophy as suspect from a democratic point of view. Certainly the "no religious test" clause in the Constitution does not mean that one

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

must vote for someone with whose political philosophy he disagrees.

On the other hand, the practical exigencies of the actual political situation may cancel out his qualms. From a Protestant point of view, it is likely that any one of the five or six Roman Catholics who by any stretch of the imagination are possible candidates for the presidency of the United States in 1960 would be a safer bet to prevent any encroachments upon the liberties of the people as they have been traditionally conceived in terms of the separation of church and state, than any of the possible non-Roman candidates. A Roman Catholic President, given present circumstances, would necessarily be on guard not to give any justification for a charge that he is seeking any special advantage for his Church. It can also be argued that recent non-Roman Presidents have in fact exhibited a tendency to make concessions to pressures exerted by the Roman Church and that, given the present situation, a non-Roman President will find the temptation to make such concessions difficult to resist. Furthermore, there is always the possibility that a Roman Catholic President might prove to be one of that not uncommon breed—an independent-minded Roman Catholic who, in spite of what is officially required of him, insists upon thinking for himself.

## Commentary

### The Adolescent Phase of Pastoral Theology

#### TO THE EDITOR OF RELIGION IN LIFE:

The youngest member of the theological family is "pastoral psychology" as it was known in its infancy, or "pastoral theology" as it is now known in its adolescence. As a newcomer, it is looked down on by the more adult disciplines of biblical, historical and systematic theology. It is taken to be a fraternal twin of practical theology, a child incapable of mature reflection yet necessary to get the "chores" done. It has a place in the family, but a subordinate one.

Now the youngster is beginning to grow up. He no longer is content to let the older members of the family lord it over him. He is struggling to find an identity of his own, which will enable him to contribute to the well-being of the family because of his distinctiveness, not simply by his usefulness.

The first major attempt at self-consciousness on the part of pastoral theology has come from Seward Hiltner in his *Preface to Pastoral Theology* (Abingdon Press, 1958; cf. his article in the Autumn 1959 issue of *RELIGION IN LIFE*). The modesty of the title reflects the adolescent phase of development. This is but a beginning, a first step toward pastoral theology's knowing what it is. It reveals both the vigor and the premature synthesis of an adolescent claim.

The vigor is felt in the way new approaches to old problems are examined. The growing data from the behavioral and biological sciences makes us see the Church and its ministry in more varied and dynamic ways than we have previously. The Pauline view of the Church as the "Body of Christ" is opened up afresh by the organizing perspective growing out of biology (pp. 198-200). The communicating of the gospel must be a relational matter and not simply hurling the kerygma into a hostile or indifferent world (pp. 175-183). The shepherding of souls cannot ignore what has been learned (or rather, rediscovered) about the unity of man (healing) or the strengthening of the inner self (sustaining) or the clarifying of the operating forces within and around the person (guiding) (pp. 89-101, 116-119, 145-154).

The premature synthesis, from my point of view, is seen in appropriating the "shepherding perspective" as "the" perspective for pastoral theology. For as the author states, pastoral theology is "that branch or field of theological knowledge and inquiry that brings the shepherding perspective to bear upon all the operations and functions of the church and the minister, and then draws conclusions of a theological order from reflection on these observations" (p. 20). While poimenics (the study of shepherding) reflects a structural expression of the term "pastoral" (pp. 15, 16), I would suggest the term "person" or "personal" as an additional expression of "pastoral." The pastor is "the person," the "proper" man, as Luther indicates, the representative man, the one to whom an individual turns in search of his personhood. But the pastor as "the person" has his role defined by the New Testament primarily as "diakonia," serving rather than shepherding. (Cf. *The Ministry in Historical Perspective*, ed. Niebuhr and Williams, p. 10.)

Throughout his discussion Hiltner stresses the importance of discovering the person's inner life, educating or leading out that which is there. This is in contrast to an invasion of the person by the all-knowing pastor. Thus the "ob-

stetrical" approach is set over against a "presentational" approach (p. 119). While I find the discussion of the shepherding perspective very suggestive, it also makes me somewhat restive. For it tends to imply, despite all denials, an inherently superior individual watching over an inherently inferior individual. The tender and solicitous care cannot ultimately make for a mutual relationship, a mutual ministry, according to the analogy. As such, all espousal of "eductive guiding" (pp. 151 ff.) is but a matter of semantic gymnastics. As one reader has indicated, the symbol is that of a strong person destroying another person's strength by fostering an unhealthy dependency. Thus, by placing all his eggs in the basket of shepherding, the writer is driven to a continual redefinition of words ("fighting the language," p. 198) or a continual rescrabbling of words (replacing edification, comforting, discipline, by healing, sustaining, guiding, pp. 64-69).

Again and again concern is expressed with establishing "a sense of identification with our pastoral roots and heritage" (p. 70). This is accomplished in four ways: (a) by using the term "shepherding"; (b) by using the parable of the Good Samaritan as the basic image (p. 68); (c) by tracing briefly the Protestant development of pastoral theology (pp. 40-51); (d) by recourse to the nineteenth-century clergyman, Ichabod S. Spencer. The question is whether or not he has accomplished his purpose of establishing historical identity.

As far as (a) is concerned, he has given us only one aspect of our roots and heritage, overlooking such concepts as "diakonia" and "overseer," to mention only two. As for (b), the parable is rather flimsy to carry the whole weight of theory which he places on it. This would be in contrast to making, say, the event of the crucified Christ carry the whole weight of theory, which I believe is a sounder direction in which pastoral theology might move. Regarding (c), he does establish a sense of pastoral history. As for (d), and it is on Spencer that he places the entire weight of "historical dimension," his position breaks down.

Because Spencer is the basic material with which the thesis is illustrated, let us examine Hiltner's use of him more carefully. He claims repeatedly that he is identifying Spencer with "our own pastoral history" (pp. 72, 123, 162). Actually Spencer is apparently the only minister prior to the twentieth century who provides us with descriptive and not merely anecdotal material (pp. 71-2). For that reason Hiltner is more than justified in using Spencer. However, I think Spencer's value is not that he helps us establish a sense of identity with our pastoral history. His value is that he is an excellent illustration of a nonclinically trained, psychologically unsophisticated, but perceptively sharp pastor.

Excerpts from Spencer's interviews (e.g. pp. 131-132, p. 135) illustrate the way a good many ministers relate to parishioners in trouble. They deal with facts, arguments, information. There is no attempt to get at feelings. Unfortunately, there are some men who do not reveal the insight and patience and acceptance of Spencer which compensate for his nondynamic approach.

Hiltner's use of Spencer's notes is not to discover operational truths but to highlight Hiltner's preconceived convictions (see e.g. p. 197). It is not that I see anything wrong with the procedure. In fact, it is precisely his use of Spencer that makes the book come alive. What is objected to is his misrepresentation of what he is doing. For by his not recognizing it, his historical concern and position can be dismissed and his contemporary relevance is restricted.

Despite his weak link with tradition and despite his theory of shepherding representing a premature synthesis, nevertheless, Hiltner's major concern to draw

theological conclusions from pastoral operations is of decisive importance. He rightly insists there can be no "practical opportunism" in such endeavor (p. 25). Nor is this simply a matter of applying theological answers to various concrete situations. The danger of his approach, of which he is certainly conscious, is that of falling into the trap of descriptionism—an analysis of what "is" turning into what "ought to be." This is what Kinsey and all researchers like him end up doing, even though unintentionally. Their methodology elicits that kind of reductionist response.

What we find in Hiltner's methodology is not so simple a movement from operation or function to theological conclusion. Nor is it simply a denial of theological dimension applied to concrete operation. Rather a closer analysis reveals a very subtle and very fruitful interaction between theory, application, operation and reflection. This is a "kissing cousin" of the Tillichian method of correlation, in which there is a very real interaction between question and answer. And that is exactly what we discover here without the systematic analysis of God's answer and man's predicament.

Because of the convenience of using one-to-one relationships (p. 178) the dimension of man-in-community is minimized. It is precisely here that any understanding of pastoral theology has to be careful. There is no question but that analysis of a less complex situation is easier. But to stop there is to fall into the same analytical trap as so much of experimental psychology. Life is restricted to that which is manageable and controllable; anything outside this little circle is ignored. The ultimate reductionism is seen in what is popularly known as "rat" psychology. By studying rats a man learns something *significant* about himself. If our thinking in the field of pastoral theology cannot move beyond the one-to-one relationship and on into man-in-community, then we not only remain immature but fail to make the contribution to the life of the Church that is potentially here.

Thus far in his writings Hiltner has not moved very far beyond the more simple situations. His operational conceptions of communicating and organizing offer fertile ground for such an advance. The tension between man and community can only be prematurely resolved in either anarchy or totalitarianism, in either isolated Christians or a collectivist Church. In seeking to retain for the shepherding perspective "the quest for the good of the person or persons involved—temporarily, if need be, without thought of the larger good of larger groups or institutions" (p. 68) he is dangerously close to resolving the tension prematurely. Granted the premise that every form of heteronomy must be broken in the name of a new autonomy. Yet we must never lose sight of the fact that our ultimate goal is a new theonomy, a situation in which the "new" man participates in the "renewing" of community and the "new" community fosters the "renewing" of man.

The theological family can be grateful for this first venture into adult identity on the part of pastoral theology. It prepares the way for a continuing dialogue within the family. It rightly realizes that there must be not a restricted concern with application alone, but a broader concern with contribution as well. Pastoral theology is coming of age. And the rest of the theological family ignores its presence to its own loss, as well as to the loss of pastoral theology itself.

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## Book Reviews and Notices

**American Catholic Crossroads: Religious Secular Encounters in the Modern World.** By WALTER J. ONG, S.J. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959. xi-160 pp. \$3.50.

**Faith and Understanding in America.** By GUSTAVE WEIGEL, S.J. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959. 170 pp. \$3.75.

**Understanding Roman Catholicism: A Guide to Papal Teaching for Protestants.** By WINTHROP S. HUDSON. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959. 192 pp. \$3.50.

**Interpreting Protestantism to Catholics.** By WALTER R. CLYDE. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959. 160 pp. \$3.00.

Many Protestants have not recognized that in recent years the Roman Catholic Church in America has produced some brilliant spokesmen. The first two books listed above, written by well-qualified Catholic authors, may be considered as complementary inquiries into different problems confronting contemporary Catholicism. These collections of essays indicate some of the dimensions of Protestant-Catholic conversation in this country.

1. Father Ong is concerned with the Church's relationship with the cosmic order which is being explored by scientists with such amazing results. The Associate Professor of English at St. Louis University would like the Church to speak to this development in cosmological terms. The immediate necessity for doing so is that the American hierarchy, deeply involved in university education, has responsibilities to scientific investigation. The Church has been slow in understanding its role in a pluralistic world and in elaborating a "university theology." The Church must be concerned not only with apologetics but also with the "meaning of the Word in the universe." It is because of the Incarnation, the Word which became flesh, that the Church is catholic and has a stake in all that takes place in time and space. The Church, which is the extension of the Incarnation, according to the author, must integrate new discoveries and new facts with revelation and explain its message to the world in terms of the totality of human knowledge. The cohesive of the pluralistic world is dialogue. And it is because Christ became a person that the Catholic may participate in dialogue, the meeting of person with person, the "grasping" of one another in understanding. Dialogue based upon an Incarnational orientation to the cosmos is the method of achieving unity while preserving differences between one person and another.

2. Ong's brother Jesuit, Father Weigel, is less concerned about the cosmic order than he is about the order of the country. Weigel, who is professor of Ecclesiology at Woodstock College in Maryland, finds the hierarchy in the United States in a position, as never before, to shape the mind of America. The "moment" requires an assertion of Catholic faith. From the perspective of what may be termed seminary theology, he points to the lack of integrity in much Protestant thought and to the divisions among Protestants. While admitting that such disintegration is a Protestant affair, the Church is nevertheless concerned when Protestant crises produce unwholesome changes in the environment in which the Catholic lives. With waning Protestantism in mind, Weigel reflects upon revelation and the meaning of the Word in

the United States. The Catholic Church is "the Body of Christ Himself, God's definitive legate to the world for redemption, sanctification and doctrine," the doctrine being atemporal and always valid. The Scripture and tradition are ecclesiastical "instruments" whereby the Church infallibly communicates the Word of God. In this sense, the interpretation of the Incarnation is not so much the foundation of a Christian's cosmic concern, as it is the means by which the Church justifies its right to proclaim theological truth. Weigel speaks more in terms of communication than of dialogue. His approach is basically apologetic, and while he describes various movements within Protestantism with some insight, he desires to be understood more than to understand.

These few words do not cover the suggestiveness of the two books. The reviewer may express gratitude for them, and yet regret that such illuminating writers, because of their commitment, are unable to see the Roman Catholic Church as others see it. Ong and Weigel speak of the Church as a "mysterious extension of the Person of Christ" and claim that the "word of God is spoken by the Catholic Church alone." Protestants, also listening to the Scriptures and to Christian tradition, deny these claims based upon a misunderstanding of the Incarnation. For the non-Catholic, aspects of Roman Catholicism appear as a not-so-mysterious extension of vested interests, which are erroneously identified with and declared necessary to the fulfillment of God's purposes in the universe.

3. Winthrop Hudson, Baptist and Professor at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, warns that some recent conversation between Protestants and Catholics may miss the point. What aspect of Catholicism above all other aspects helps to identify the Roman Catholic, he asks? It is, according to him, "Roman obedience." He presses his case by collecting authoritative papal statements on the legislative, judicial, and executive absolutism of the Pope, the Catholic conception of the Christian State, Christian Democracy, and Catholic Action. In this documentary, Hudson may not do full justice to the theological base—such as the Catholic interpretation of the Incarnation—which makes this obedience natural for the Catholic. By such neglect he raises doubts as to whether or not he has reached the heart of the matter. He may easily be accused of perpetuating what Ong calls the "paranoid myth" of a "monolithic totalitarian Catholicism" and his work is not likely to be accepted for what it is intended to be—an effort to promote mutual understanding. But by producing the record and by calling a spade a spade, Hudson suggests that the Protestant image of Catholicism as a threatening power structure does not spring so much from Protestant imagination as from the teachings and actions of the Church itself. The implication is that struggles between worldly interests are not dissolved simply by interesting dialogue between persons.

4. The volume by Presbyterian Walter Clyde is a layman's guide to conversations with Catholics. Being Professor of Christian Education and Missions at Western Theological Seminary he wants the Protestant to be able to interpret Protestantism for the Catholic. His writing differs from the urbane essays of the Jesuit authors. But Clyde reminds his lay readers with some timeliness that theological discussion is not the exclusive monopoly of an ecclesiastical or intellectual elite, necessary as experts may be. The questions which divide us, as well as the universe over which God has given man an ever-expanding dominion, are the concern of every Christian.

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**The Degrees of Knowledge.** By JACQUES MARITAIN. Trans. under supervision of Gerald B. Phelan. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959. xix-476 pp. \$7.50.

It is an experience to reread M. Maritain's work after a span of years, and it is a pleasure to do this rereading in an English translation which in some points clarifies the French text, yet guards with accuracy the living character of Maritain's French style. Anyone who has attempted even a small translation of Maritain's work realizes the task involved in this volume; and the team headed by Dr. Phelan is to be congratulated on the result.

*Distinguer pour Unir, ou Les Degrés du Savoir* was first published in French in 1932. The three subsequent editions do not make any important revisions. This work is basic in any study of Maritain's thought, for though later works add some significant developments, this one gives the background and the essential setting for his views on philosophy, science, and theology. Except for a short section on the principles of a practical science it does not touch on his ethical, political, or social views.

The very title of the book enunciates its fundamental problem. Knowledge to be knowledge seems to demand some sort of unity or connectedness. But the actual way we obtain knowledge of reality is through many diversified fields of knowledge. Are all these fields of organized knowledge to be entitled science, and if so, how is science to be understood so as to express the unity and yet guard the distinctive character and rightful autonomy of the many fields?

As Maritain says, ". . . there are in the world of the mind structural differentiations and a diversity of dimensions whose recognition is of the greatest importance. Serious misunderstanding can be avoided only by assigning to each type of thought its exact situation in this sort of transcendental topography." (pp. 315ff.) His task is to elucidate the differences as well as to understand the many in unity. His position is that unity must be attained through knowledge of an aspect of the real that transcends the specifically different viewpoints of the various sciences. Such knowledge will be not only a science but also a wisdom.

In actual fact a yet higher wisdom than this has been given to man by the gift of Revelation, revealing not only the existence of God but also giving some insight into the very life of God Himself and His dealings with men. This latter part of M. Maritain's book may well be to many the most interesting section. It explains how both Revelation and the infused mystical experience of this revealed supernatural life can, under and with the reflection of reason, constitute another science, which as the science of the highest Cause also constitutes the Ultimate Wisdom open to man. The book is thus divided into two main sections: the first dealing with Degrees of Rational Knowledge, the second with Degrees of Suprarational Knowledge.

The section on Rational Knowledge is introduced by a general explanation of rational wisdom which deals with the ". . . commonness of transcendental perfections which exist at once in Him (the Cause) and in things" (p. 6). The very poverty of this science of the first Cause awakens, Maritain holds, a desire for ultimate contemplation and union, which can be had only through Religion. Yet he suggests that it could also be said that the given Revelation calls for the metaphysical activity of reason. Thus modern thought, in losing sight of both the wisdom of metaphysics and the wisdom of the saints, has wounded reason itself, which alone can be cured by adherence to Uncreated Truth.

Among the ancients it was the pre-eminent dignity of metaphysics that appro-

priated the notion of science. Today that notion cannot be indiscriminately applied to those fields of knowledge which we moderns primarily designate as science. But, he holds, philosophy warrants the name of science, and science in the full sense is an explanatory knowledge revealing "to us intelligible necessities immanent in the object; they make known to us effects by principles, or reasons for being, by causes, taking this latter term in the quite literal sense that the ancients gave it" (p. 32). "Such science gives us essence delivered from existence in time" (p. 33). That which pre-empted the title of science today, the sciences of observation and induction, attain the essences or natures only in signs and substitutes. They note "necessities in things by sensible experience, not in assigning the reasons by intelligible means" (p. 34).

There are two reasons Maritain notes why we cannot have one perfect science of nature. The first has to do with the ontological character of the reality that is correlative to our powers of knowing. It is a changing and contingent reality, so the universality we grasp is only of a general abstract character. The second, however, though it presupposes a changing reality, is due more to our way of knowing; we cannot directly reach by the power of our mind the essential structure of reality in its specific character, so we must replace the minimum insight by a knowledge through signs and substitutes. The two types of science—the direct but only universal insight, and the indirect insight by signs—are not reducible to one another. The further distinction of the sciences within these broad divisions he gives in a chart on page 39. But this chart cannot be fully understood until after his explanation of knowledge in general, given in Chapter III.

Chapter III, if not the most interesting for the general reader, is philosophically the most basic. Maritain here gives us his version of realism, recalling in his exposition a famous controversy having its source in the revival of Thomism under Mercier of Louvain. Besides this historical point Maritain explains his notion of being. The human intellect does not bear on itself but on being, and of being he says that ". . . the reality in question does not necessarily belong to the actual (existential) order, even though the intellect does first grasp the principle of identity as incarnate in some example of sensible existence. Of itself that principle bears upon the whole range of being and especially on the order of essences, or the possible real" (p. 77), which is not thought of as thought, but as being.

Maritain's later insistence on existence in *Existence and the Existent* might perhaps modify his position in this chapter and at the same time cause a greater insistence on the difference between philosophy and science, at least to the extent that both are not primarily seeking a knowledge of essences. As it stands now, the quest of the philosopher is to gain some knowledge, though a necessarily very general knowledge, of the nature of things; while that of the scientist is a quest of these same natures but gained only by signs and substitutes. It might be asked if the emphasis on being as meaning existence would not cause a somewhat different statement of the quest of philosophy of science. From this point of view, would not the philosopher seek to understand some actual mode of existence while the scientist, supposing existence, would seek to understand something of essence, though in an indirect fashion by his various means of analysis?

In the light of the mind's abstractive grasp of being as essence (but thought of as being) he develops in Chapter IV the main types of knowing. These cover the universe of the sensible real; the universe of the praeter-real (or mathematics); and the universe of the trans-sensible, opening out on the trans-intelligible known to us only by analogy.

The first universe includes the philosophy of nature, which covers the meaning of such notions as "corporal substance, quality, operation, potency, material and formal cause" (p. 148, cf. p. 175). But this knowledge of sensible nature must be filled out for us by the empirical sciences. These he divides as those of the empirico-logical order and those of the empirico-schematic order. The knowledge afforded by each of these he entitles perinoetic, as opposed to the dianoetic of philosophy. In this fashion he emphasizes the exterior and substitutional character of science as opposed to the intellectual insight sought by the philosopher. But he also insists that because of the poverty of human intellectual insight the scientific approach is a necessary complement. Though the scientific is not reducible to the philosophical insight, it must function for that insight to the degree that the latter is not attainable. Thus these two sorts of knowledge do not lose their distinctive character and autonomy, yet they are always in a co-relative relation, which relation should also be recognized by both. Philosophy for the scientist is outside the field of his competence, yet philosophy is necessary for the total understanding of the real and of the role of science. Maritain illustrates how different disciplines may express different levels of knowledge with respect to a notion referred to by all levels: for example, the notion of cause (p. 150).

The philosophy of nature constitutes for Maritain the fundamental basis for metaphysics, for it is in knowing a certain manner of being that we attain to a knowledge of being as such and then see that being embraces everything (p. 120). Seeing it as all-embracing, we reach the intelligible object—the transcendental of metaphysics—together with the other transcendental aspects of the true and the good. When we have proved that God must be the cause of being we realize that "being itself and the transcendental analogues are in God without these limitations (of the created order) and therefore in a manner and according to an infinity, a purity, which cannot be signified or conceived. . . ." (p. 296). This opens up a negative way of "not knowing," and we are on the border line of the rational and the mystical (p. 239).

The mystical, however, cannot be in perfect continuity with the development of metaphysical knowledge even at its highest level as natural theology. Though he discusses with sympathy the human approaches to mysticism, he yet holds that true mysticism demands the gift of theological faith together with the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Mystical experience interpreted as God touched and located through love (p. 262) must, lest it become a human aberration, be based on a supernatural inspired knowledge.

One of the most interesting sections of the book is his exposition of the teaching of St. John of the Cross who, he holds, is not writing a speculative science but instructions regarding the practice of a practical science. St. John "assembles the means, the dynamic moments by which action (here the highest living of faith in love) comes into existence" (p. 326). The void St. John stresses is in no way a contradiction of the ontological position of St. Thomas, who holds that being is good. The void has to do with an activity of self-surrender on our part, of our way of reaching God in order to permit Him to be reached in His way. It is love totally accepting Him. It is in this self-surrender of the soul in its highest activity that man reaches God as He has revealed and given Himself. The soul rests in this love; its nonactivity is its acceptance.

The book is followed by Appendices clarifying certain points or discussing controversial ones. They touch on the concept, analogy, knowledge of God; subsistence

and its revision; the work of Père Gardeil, and of M. Blondel; speculative and practical (moral) philosophy; and a clarification on St. John of the Cross.

The whole book presents a thought-provoking synthesis, stimulating to a thinker either in philosophy, in science, or in theology. It is not easy reading, but it is worth reading.

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**Holy Writ or Holy Church.** By GEORGE H. TAVARD. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960. 260 pp. \$5.00.

**Protestantism.** By GEORGE H. TAVARD. Vol. 137 of *The Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism*. Translated from the French by Rachel Attwater. New York: Hawthorn Books Publishers, 1959. 137 pp. \$2.95.

1. Not only since the Reformation but even in the years preceding it the problem of Scripture versus Tradition was the subject of innumerable controversies; and since the sixteenth century this same problem has deeply split the Christian world.

In the first mentioned of his two studies Tavard takes us all the way from the primitive Church to the Council of Trent in order "to contribute to an ecumenical dialogue over an issue which is daily becoming more acute."

We learn in the chapter entitled "The Patristic View"—in which the author deals, incidentally, rather too summarily with the formation of the Canon—that Tradition (*paradosis*) shall be understood "on the background of the Patristic conception of the Church." Hence the author does not distinguish between the early Church and the "apostolic tradition" on the one hand and the Church of the bishops, the post-apostolic Church and the "ecclesiastical tradition" on the other. He fails to emphasize the importance of the second century, in which the Church set up the principle of the Canon, though its final limits were established later, and by doing so recognized the norm of the apostolic tradition to which it would thereafter return in its teachings.

Up to the thirteenth century the Catholic Church followed the principle of balancing Sacred Scripture with its own theology which was derived from Scripture, and had been developed by the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. Thomas regards "Sacred Doctrine" as the sum total of Scripture and the theology of both Fathers and Doctors.

The second and third parts of the book are concerned with the crisis which gradually overcame the Church. With consummate scholarship the author points out various instances where two kinds of truth were being formulated, e.g., an oral transmission and, running parallel to it, the Canon handed down by the Church. An ever stronger demand was voiced for a "sharper affirmation and practice of the primacy of the Pope," and at the same time there was an outcry for the stricter enforcement of "the traditional and theological conception of Scripture as the backbone of the Church's authority."

One of the victims of this struggle was Jan Hus. He is frequently considered a forerunner of the actual Reformation. So is Reginald Pecock, a fifteenth-century English priest. Pecock contrasted the Church of his own time with the Apostolic Church and identified only the latter with the New Testament writings. In his view the post-Apostolic Church was merely a "privileged investigator of the New Testament."

The author describes the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as a prelude to the Reformation. Martin Luther's sermons and writings were in fact not a bolt from the blue, though they certainly inaugurated a new and more radical point of view. Ecclesiastical authority was of minor significance to both Luther and Calvin. Authority was only accorded to the "Word of God" as found in Scripture. Luther calls the teaching of both the Fathers and the Doctors of the Church "human teaching" and sharply distinguishes between their writings and the sacred Scripture. In this context the author should have mentioned Luther's doctrine of the "*claritas scripturae*."

The last chapters of the book are devoted to the Council of Trent and the discussion which led up to it. The decree of April, 1546, the author finds, stresses the dynamic element of the living word. "This dynamic element uses two sets of vessels: Holy Scripture and traditions. . . . Both Scripture and traditions are entitled to the same adhesion of faith." Perhaps one should add: The Catholic understanding of tradition is in fact an answer to the problem of hermeneutics with which Protestantism has to come to grips in each new generation.

As a footnote to the ecumenical outlook on Scripture and tradition in both Protestant and Catholic theology, I would like to draw attention to a *Festschrift* published recently in Germany: *Begegnung der Christen*, Frankfurt a/M, Stuttgart, 1959. This *Festschrift*, dedicated to Otto Karrer, a Swiss Catholic priest, is edited by a Protestant and a Catholic. The Catholic is Professor Maximilian Roesle, O.S.B., a Benedictine from the famous Swiss monastery of Einsiedel; the Protestant editor is Professor Oscar Cullmann of the University of Basel, Switzerland, and the Sorbonne in Paris. Chapter three of the *Festschrift* is specially concerned with Scripture and tradition from the ecumenical point of view. It is written by one Protestant and one Catholic scholar.

2. In the Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism, edited by Daniel-Rops and now appearing in an English translation, the volume *Protestantism* has been entrusted to Georges Tavard, who is already well known on both sides of the Atlantic for his ecumenical frame of mind. The authors of a Catholic Encyclopedia have primarily in mind Catholic readers who are seeking information about subjects such as Protestantism. But Tavard's contribution is quite as useful for Protestants who wish to familiarize themselves with the Catholic approach to Protestantism as it has developed from the Reformation to our time.

In the chapters dealing with the Reformers and the Reformation the author accords the title of "theological genius" to Calvin on account of his impressive work, *Institutio Christianae*; for it was Calvin who really broke with scholastic Catholicism. Luther on the other hand still showed the influence of the Rhenish mystics and the influence of scholastic theologians such as Gregory of Rimini (p. 24).

It is of course quite impossible to do full justice to the complex historical development of Protestantism in a small book of this kind; but the chapter on "Liberal Protestantism" is unfortunately one of the least objective in this otherwise admirably objective little book. When Tavard mentions Schweitzer's work, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, he seems to forget that Albert Schweitzer was the first scholar to emphasize the all-importance of Christ's eschatological message and the significance of eschatology for the whole of the New Testament. And when he mentions Adolf von Harnack in the context of "making of Christianity a moral and social aspiration," he forgets entirely to acknowledge the great debt owed by both Catholic and Protestant New Testament scholarship to this great historian.

The chapter on the Neo-orthodox reaction which is mainly concerned with

the theology of Karl Barth is lucid and very much to the point. Barth's "analogia of faith" is contrasted with the Catholic "analogia entis." However, the author's conclusion that "Barth has mistaken the meaning of the Catholic doctrine" is a little too ecumenical in outlook (p. 85).

The quotation which ends Fr. Tavard's book is typical for the spirit in which it is written. It is taken from the message of Pius XII in 1941 in which the Supreme Pontiff referred to the Protestants with the words: "Without belonging to the visible body of the Catholic Church, (they) are very close to us through faith in God and in Jesus Christ."

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**The Case for Orthodox Theology.** By EDWARD JOHN CARNELL. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959. 162 pp. \$3.50.

**The Case for Theology in Liberal Perspective.** By L. HAROLD DEWOLF. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959. 206 pp. \$3.50.

**The Case for a New Reformation Theology.** By WILLIAM HORDERN. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959. 176 pp. \$3.50.

The Westminster Press is to be congratulated on its success in getting three representative trends in Protestant theology so well defined by these three "convinced adherents." Though they did not know each other's identity or see each other's manuscripts, they have set the stage for a lively conversation which may do much to clarify the present theological situation.

For one thing, it may help to overcome misunderstandings due to outworn party labels and stereotypes. All three of our authors make it very clear that they do not defend and even sharply oppose many of the trends commonly associated with what have been called "orthodoxy," "liberalism," and "neo-orthodoxy." This is most striking in the case of Carnell, who carries on a constant running fight against the tendency to what he calls "cultism" in orthodox circles, notably among the "fundamentalists"—with whom he does not wish any longer to be identified. Similarly, DeWolf protests that he is *not* the kind of liberal caricatured and condemned in the pages of Reinhold Niebuhr's books. Finally, William Hordern, after giving one of the fairest descriptions of "neo-orthodoxy" yet made by anyone in his *Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology*, has repudiated the term in the very act of joining the movement, which he now renames "new reformation theology." If these three little books are widely read as representative of the three liveliest alternatives in present-day Protestant theology—and they ought to be—there will be far less shadow-boxing and far more real encounter in current theological debate.

While all three theologians are, broadly speaking, *evangelical* and *biblical*, and no two of them so widely split as the fundamentalists and modernists of forty years ago, there are important issues dividing them. These issues mainly root in their conception of the nature and place of biblical revelation in Christian teaching.

1. Carnell regards the Bible as a source of infallible propositional truth. The God-man Jesus Christ incarnates divine omniscience as well as divine love, so whatever he teaches cannot err; and the Bible as a whole testifies to him in divinely inspired words. The obscurer parts of the Bible are to be interpreted by the clearer, the Old Testament by the New, the Gospels by the Epistles, and the symbolic parts by the "didactic." This in practice means that the didactic theology

of the Apostle Paul, summarized in Romans and Galatians, is the inerrant Word of God. This may not be "literalism," but it may fairly be called "didacticism."

2. While Carnell makes a limited appeal to "natural theology" as a confirmation of Christian revelation, and uses science as a negative check on wrong interpretations of Scripture, DeWolf uses reason as a powerful apologetic instrument, commending the gospel to our age by detecting inconsistencies in its older formulations and resolving them with the aid of verified truth from anywhere and everywhere. The Bible is a primary source of Christian teaching for him, but is not infallible. The word God speaks in Scripture needs to be tested at every point by its congruity with "the word he has spoken through general revelation or the word that he now speaks in faithful hearts" (p. 57). To base Christian teaching exclusively upon special revelation, as Barth does, while leaving no room for rational philosophy, seems to lead to the tragic consequences of a "religious isolationism" which gives up the modern mind to Marxian materialism or some other form of secularism "without the firing of a shot" (p. 185).

3. Here William Hordern objects that the kind of philosophy used by liberal apologists has lost all persuasive power since the rise of "analytic philosophy" in Great Britain; while between this new type of philosophy and Barthian theology there is a strange harmony. Both admit that we have to build our philosophies and theologies "without proof," starting from some faith-perspective, and analyzing our language to see if it carries out this perspective (pp. 27, 32). *Perspective through meaningful events* is what Bible revelation gives us, rather than propositional truth.

There is one bad misunderstanding in Hordern's stimulating book which this reviewer would like to clear away, since it involves a theological trend with which I am identified. Near the end (p. 165) Hordern mentions the rise of something called "ecumenical theology," and confesses that he fears it. "The very concept," he says, "implies that finite men can gain the one true theology and, presumably, all deviators would be cast out into the unecumenical darkness." May I say most emphatically that this is *not* what I mean by "ecumenical theology," but rather a process of conversation between different church traditions and different schools of thought, which does not aim at any final uniformity, but at a continuing process of redefining agreements and differences in a free face-to-face encounter. Actually, the present series of three books is an excellent example of just such an illuminating conversation or encounter. Ecumenical theology is not *a* theological movement; it is a lively process of interaction between movements of different types. One may confidently predict that the reading of these excellent little books will promote ecumenical theology in this sense, on one of its two chief "fronts," the liberal-conservative one. It needs only to be supplemented by similar encounters on the Catholic-Protestant front to provide a well-rounded basis for ecumenical theology in our generation.

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**Religion and Culture: Essays in Honor of Paul Tillich.** Edited by WALTER LEIBRECHT. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959. xi-399 pp. \$7.50.

How to review in a few hundred words the planetary system entitled *Religion and Culture: Essays in Honor of Paul Tillich*? A man would need intellectual arms each as long as the solar system. Not all the essays bear direct relationship

with Tillichian thought (we are grateful to have Barth's paean on Mozart, while wondering if it is pertinent to this *Festschrift*), but all bow in admiration toward one of the finest yet lowliest minds of our era. Certainly the introductory essay by Walter Leibrecht is pertinent. Tillich's thought is hard to delineate, especially hard in small compass, for he is philosopher, ontologist, psychologist, mystic, existentialist, and theologian all in one; but Leibrecht, who at Harvard was Tillich's associate for a time, has come close to fulfilling the task.

As for the twenty-five essays, a reviewer can but light here and there for a moment in gratitude, well knowing that his flight has overpassed many another treasure. Eric Fromm pleads that psychiatry, before it can grant healing in depth, must go beyond the scrutiny of the patient's mind as an object, to offer and find a communion of subjects, and that at the profoundest level: it is a revolutionary plea! Karl Jaspers traces the fallacies in the "myths" of our time, such as the myth of nonpersonal man or of continual progress; and accents the need for a new individualism of "deepest inwardness" in "the eternity of the True." Reinhold Niebuhr offers a moving confession of the inadequacies of his early liberalism-socialism, and a typically penetrating exposé of other isms of our time. Father Gustave Weigel proposes that our debate on demythologizing the New Testament may become a journey into a desert because the proper word is symbol, not myth: we are dealing, he argues, not with "prescientific myths" but with "permanently valid symbols" which share the life of that which they symbolize. He is not so convincing when he proposes a further step—from symbol to Thomistic analogy.

"What more shall I say, for time would fail me to tell . . ."? Georges Florovsky's essay, "The Predicament of the Christian Historian," is actually a discussion of the predicament of any historian; for the historian, as the author penetratingly shows, must single out from multitudinous facts a handful that are "important," and so organize them. The historian always thus introduces a faith, and must further enter with some kind of love into the spirit of those whom he portrays. What faith? What love? One wishes that Father Florovsky had not made so sharp a break between his discussion of history and his discussion of biblical history; or, rather, that he had dealt more extensively, as he is splendidly equipped to do, with the validity of the stance from which biblical history is written. Karl Heim shows that secularism is itself a heresy on biblical thought, to become now an attempt to give man and his world an impossible eternity; and he proposes that Christians should now join in the destruction of the world's idolatries (were not the first Christians called *atheoi*?) as prelude to the positive task of proclaiming Christ.

"What more shall I say . . ."? Gabriel Marcel objects vigorously to our common practice of applying the concept of causality to God. That procedure, he argues, reduces God not only to a Cause among other causes, but to an object scientifically conceived. We should not say that God "causes" pain or even that he "permits" pain. This language is not applicable: we would be wiser to speak of the self-giving of the *Mysterium Tremendum*. Bultmann writes of genuine and secularized preaching, another Bultmann than that of the debate about myth and symbol. Preaching is secularized, he maintains, when it becomes philosophy or teaching or ethical instruction or the inculcation of doctrine or the portrayal of Jesus as hero: the original proclamation was "Jesus Christ is Lord"! Helmut Thielicke has an incisive word on the Christian message in an atomic age, and on the subsidiary counsel which Christian faith can then offer to the anxiety and pride of our age.

This review is no review: it is a bee-flight with more buzzing than honey. Yet it may serve to incite the reader to read the book. Too many of us read lazily

in trivial books. If we are preachers we hope thus to find instantly available help. We would be wiser to read books such as this *Festschrift*: we would come by a far richer, even though delayed, harvest. If everyone whose eye falls on these paragraphs could have been present when the volume was presented to Paul Tillich at Harvard, or at the dinner for him and a few friends following that event! He is not often autobiographical, but on these occasions he revealed

"Those hours of life that were a bursting fount,  
Sprinkling the dusty heart with living springs."

As we listened we found it hard to believe that his heart was ever "dusty"; but we became doubly sure that few men in our time can so searchingly reinterpret the Church to itself in its essential word, or so helpfully communicate the New Being to the intelligently "open" mind that is presently alienated from the Church.

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**The Prophetic Voice in Modern Fiction.** By WILLIAM R. MUELLER. New York: Association Press, 1959. ix-183 pp. \$3.50.

Professor William Mueller of the Department of English of Goucher College has contributed the most recent addition to the steadily growing library of "Haddam House" books, and it is a valuable book. One gathers that he has wanted primarily to address himself to college students and other young people; but the lucidity of his writing and the acuteness of his insights will, I suspect, make his work a text deemed important by many others also who want to be attentive to the analysis of modern experience that is to be found in much of the great literature of our time. "The story of our age," he declares, "is told most precisely and most eloquently in its imaginative literature," and this is the conviction, one feels, that constitutes Professor Mueller's deepest orientation as a literary critic.

Now no one will deny that, at the level of the largest generalities, this is an unexceptionable way of proceeding to take hold of modern literature. The trouble however, is that very often, at the level of concrete critical procedure, the critic who views literature as an index of "the human condition" is led to deal with individual poems and novels as though they were a kind of document—or, even worse, as though they were mere puffs of the *Zeitgeist*. And thus the formed integrity of the work of art is dissolved into a vague and helpless rumor about the Time-Spirit. But I am happy to report that this unhappy consequence is nowhere entailed in Professor Mueller's performance. For he is committed to the kind of shrewd, patient empiricism that insists always upon the stubborn concreteness of a work of art being kept in full view, and the result is that he has given us a responsible account of some of the major fiction of this century.

The book is focused on six contemporary novels, and what is fresh in Professor Mueller's method is his effort to negotiate a fairly detailed dialogue between the modern novel and the Bible. He finds the theme of "vocation" in Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the theme of the "fall" in Camus' *The Fall*, the theme of "judgment" in Kafka's *The Trial*, the theme of "suffering" in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, the theme of "love" in Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*, and the theme of the "remnant" in Silone's *A Handful of Blackberries*. And in each of his six chapters, after a careful exegesis of his text, he then summarizes the biblical

testimony on the issue at hand and suggests something of what we face, either in terms of difference or of similarity, when the two wisdoms—the ancient and the modern—are juxtaposed.

I know of no one who has taken any such tack as this before, and I am certain that Professor Mueller's way of handling it has produced a book that will be of immense help to ministers as they try to preach to the modern situation and to students and young people who are trying more deeply to understand both the Christian faith and the modern experience of life—and who are trying to do this "dialogically."

Though I have congratulated Professor Mueller for keeping his eye on his texts and for not wandering all over the map, yet I wish that he had ventured, in a final chapter at least, some over-all, synoptic judgment of modern literature and of what a transaction with it promises the Christian community in terms of deepened self-understanding. He simply talks about six twentieth-century novels in the light of biblical perspectives and lets it go at that: there is no concluding summary or specification, at a high level of literary and theological generalization, of what it all adds up to. Had such an essay been included, the texture of the book would, I think, have been very greatly enriched; but, even so, he is surely right in believing that the road he has tried to chart is a road that leads to Calvin's "true and solid wisdom." So I hope that Professor Mueller's book will be widely read and will receive the grateful attention that it deserves.

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**Sex and Family in the Bible.** By RAPHAEL PATAI. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1959. 282 pp. \$3.95.

**Sexual Relation in Christian Thought.** By DERRICK SHERWIN BAILEY. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959. viii-312 pp. \$4.50.

**Sex and Love in the Bible.** By WILLIAM GRAHAM COLE. New York: Association Press, 1959. 448 pp. \$6.50.

These three books are written upon a common theme of vital concern to human life. There is some overlap and yet each book supplements the others to make a significant contribution. Sex though not neglected had suffered from confusion and prejudice. Clarification, therefore, is need to permit a wholesome and healthful understanding of man and woman in relation to each other.

1. Dr. Patai is an anthropologist who seeks to cast light upon biblical ethics and attitudes by viewing them against their contemporary background. To do this he considers the folk life of the Middle East in recent times where striking parallels to the customs of the Bible are revealed. Although these lands are becoming "Westernized," yet many values and codes of sex and family life are reminiscent of the biblical world. By a detailed study of these people in their family life he is able to bring new clarity to the biblical attitudes toward romantic love, preparation for marriage, incest, polygamy, betrothal and wedding, the imperative of fruitfulness, adultery and rape, harlotry and sacred prostitution, the family unit, birth and death, blessing and inheritance. Sex is held in honor for procreation and to know oneself and the spouse more deeply.

2. Dr. Bailey is a theologian of the Church of England, whose historical study of *Sexual Relation in Christian Thought* is scholarly and penetrating. In contrast

to the lusty approval of sex in the Old Testament he finds a more negative attitude in Christian thought. This is not so evident in the New Testament as it is in the Patristic Age, where the virgin state is exalted above marriage. The Council of Nicaea and the Eastern Church rejected an absolute rule of celibacy for the clergy. But there were influences such as the doctrine of the Fall, the Hellenistic dualism of body and spirit, and asceticism, which led the Roman Church to hold virginity as preferred to marriage. In the Medieval Church marriage was defined in legalistic terms. To Luther and Calvin marriage was a high calling and the family a school of faith and love. Yet sex was still tainted with evil, its function was procreation, and the woman was held unequal to man.

3. Dr. Cole, Professor of Religion at Williams College, is also aware of the historical and cultural meaning of sex and love in the Bible. His ultimate goal, however, is to bring these issues into a theological perspective in reference to our life today. Biblical attitudes toward sex are frank and realistic; they provide a source of creative renewal for our own anxious and often prejudicial views of sex and love. With Dr. Bailey he finds the fulfillment of sex relations in a love that is fully personal in a sustaining community where each person is held in profound esteem. "The Bible is a story of encounters and personal dialogues" (405). "Sex involves relationships and the Bible is centered in relationships" (425). Individuals are deeply related to one another in the urgent attractions and responsibilities of family life. The biblical concept of responsible freedom and devotion of person to person is the needed alternative to sexual anarchy.

These three authors are one in their recognition of sex and love as central in human life. They see the crippling constraints that hold men and women in bondage when fear and prejudice overshadow the true meaning of encounter in which persons may know and fulfill the potentialities of their being before God.

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**No South or North.** By ROGER H. CROOK. St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1959. 121 pp. \$2.50.

**Segregation and Desegregation.** By T. B. MASTON. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959. xiii-178 pp. \$3.50.

Probably no problem is more crucial than race relations. This is true both in this nation and in the world. On many occasions people have indicated that the problem is basically a moral one. These two books are important because they address themselves to the demands of the Christian faith as regards race relations. Also they consider the relevance of the principles of democracy for race relations in America.

1. The author of *No South or North* embarks upon his task with a brief but clear survey of the history of the Negro in the United States. An examination of the pattern of racial segregation and its discriminatory effects shows that it reaches into every aspect of life. However, the writer stresses that the situation is changing. The Supreme Court ruling on segregation in the public schools (May 17, 1954) highlights this changing scene, because it demands radical adjustments in the pattern of race relations. The varied reactions of both Negroes and whites to the segregation-integration issue are presented. The reactions of Negroes run from a few who approve or accept segregation through those who advocate gradualism to the increasingly

large and effective group that is vigorously protesting the whole system of segregation. The reactions of the whites include fear on the part of many; hostility on the part of a few; a paternalistic attitude on the part of some; and a desire for genuine brotherhood in an increasing number of people. In the chapter, "Does It Make Sense?" the various arguments used to justify segregation are examined and their fallacies set forth.

The last two chapters are in many ways the heart of the book. The writer turns to the Bible for guidance. Using both Old and New Testaments, he examines the basic facets of our religious belief. "God's demands of us are the same, and our needs are the same. There is therefore no essential difference between peoples." ". . . the fact of our common relationship to Christ as Savior and Lord overrides all other differences real or imaginary between peoples." The final chapter is an appraisal of the churches—what they have done in race relations and what they have failed to do; also, it outlines what they should do. The Christian belief does not permit human relations which are superordinate-subordinate on the basis of race. The challenge to the churches to work for Christian race relations is unmistakably clear.

2. The book, *Segregation and Desegregation*, presents the Christian ideal concerning these alternatives in a clear and provocative way. The first four chapters do an excellent job of placing the segregation-desegregation issue in the proper historical, social, and psychological perspective. T. B. Maston takes as his point of departure the United States Supreme Court decision of May 17, 1954. He considers it important because it "initiated and in a sense climaxed a revolution of major proportions in the social and racial patterns of our nation." The occasion for the decision, its content and background, as well as the forces and factors which created an atmosphere favorable to the decision are examined. After calling attention to the fact that most of the immediate reactions to the decision were favorable, the author gives a lucid description of how the strong resistance to it developed. This is followed by a discussion of the reactions of Negroes and the churches. In a discussion of what the author calls the "New Reconstruction" it is pointed out that desegregation may be delayed temporarily, but the forces of history make its eventual realization almost a certainty. The chapters titled "Separation and Segregation" and "Desegregation and Integration" are devoted to the definition of terms. The interesting material presented and the dynamic presentation are a real contribution to clarifying the issues.

The remaining chapters deal with the relevance of Christian beliefs and Christian ethics. The chapter, "Biblical Teaching and Segregation," deals with the nature of God, the nature of man, the work of Christ, God's attitude toward man, and man's relation to his fellow man. The curse of Ham is considered in this chapter because so many misuse it in the attempt to justify racial segregation. The author then considers "Segregation and the Christian Ethic." This chapter presents the Christian ethic as an ethic of the will of God, of perfection, of obedient and self-sacrificing love, of the cross, and of the Holy Spirit. A clear and convincing case is made that "The Christian ideal would demand the elimination of all segregation by law or custom, based on class or color."

The two final chapters deal with segregation in the churches and the effect of segregation on world missions. One cannot escape the challenge to the churches to strive to make their racial practices consistent with the demands of the Christian message. Nor can one escape the warning that the continued failure of the churches

to Christianize their race relations is a burden upon the world Christian mission.

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**The Christian Shepherd.** By SEWARD HILTNER. New York: Abingdon Press, 1959. 190 pp. \$3.00.

This book is a series of ten essays dealing with "Some Aspects of Pastoral Care." The topics chosen are those which normally fall within the field of "pastoral theology," which have been treated by the author himself in his other works, but are expanded here as special areas with significant additions of new material and creative insight. The unifying principle for these subjects is found in the concept of the "shepherd."

In treating "Grief and Loss," the newer understanding of the nature of grief is brought to bear perceptively upon the care of the bereaved and dramatically illustrated by an example of a situation in which a pastor bravely blundered but managed, nevertheless, to help the person. Equally helpful is the essay on the pastoral care of the family where occasion is found for brief comment on the theological outlook of Protestant Christians. In this setting, notice is also taken of the changes which have occurred in the literature about parental care of children in the period between 1914 and 1942. Attention to emotional "ambiguities" which arise in marriage and family relations and which have importance in the work of the pastor is also well placed.

The essay in which the greatest strain is placed upon the metaphor of "shepherding" as the distinctive mark of the pastor is the one that deals with "Shepherding Through Fellowship." Here the clue from the Protestant doctrine of the "universal priesthood of believers" leads to the conclusion that every Christian layman has a "shepherding" function. This, indeed, is where we come out as Protestants if we apply the logic of our faith consistently. Under this concept, the church becomes a family of persons at varying stages of development in which concern, acceptance, and "mutual care of souls" should prevail.

From the standpoint of plowing new ground and working on the frontiers of the field, the three essays which should command the most careful study of every pastor are the chapters dealing with "The Class Structure," "Organization Men," and "The Rebel." Here at last a leading pastoral theologian undertakes to come to grips with the fact that, as W. I. Thomas said more than a quarter of a century ago, personality is the "subjective side of culture"; Kirson Weinberg more recently (*Society and Personality Disorders*) has described it as "the social personality." While each individual appropriates culture in unique ways that must be reckoned with in health and disease, the ultimate sources of both, excepting sheer physiological factors, are social. How a person reacts to himself in his psychic structure is inseparable from the social pattern that has nurtured him. The corollary of this is the fact that personal fulfillment arrives through meaningful integration with and service to the group. Professor Hiltner shows how the class structure affects "acceptance and rejection," how questions of "right and wrong" are similarly based, how "social mobility" often plays a decisive role in inner feelings of estrangement or loneliness, how even "men and women" are "classes."

Organization as a determiner of roles tends to rob men of their uniqueness, not to mention their potential for creativity. And let it be noted that the churches, no less than industry and business, foster the "organization man." As for the "rebel,"

the author states "that the way of the rebel has been so difficult that he is likely either to abandon the creativity imbedded in his rebellion, or else to overdo its expression in ways that are unconstructive and bring penalties upon him.

Professor Hiltner really gets down to the "facts of life" in these three essays. Pastors who take a mild view of what is written here will be guilty of escaping from the tough realities that make people sick, warp their personalities, and subject them to the bondage of neurosis as the best answer they can give in the life situations set for them by society. Thus we are challenged to examine the social order as a source of infection and to rally our forces for a work of social redemption as an imperative for prevention of anxiety and mental illness.

Who will say that further exploration of this line of thought may not lead us again to an evaluation of the social responsibility of the church? The so-called "social gospel" of the last generation was based upon concern for persons who were threatened by *external* injustices. Now the concern for the *inner* predicament of persons may lead us to an appraisal of environment that will enable us to rediscover the whole gospel in relation to the needs of the whole man.

OREN H. BAKER

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**Revelation and the Bible: Contemporary Evangelical Thought.** Ed. by CARL F. H. HENRY. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1959. 413 pp. \$6.00.

It must be recognized as valuable that, at a time when the doctrine of revelation is at the very center of international discussion in biblical and theological studies, Dr. Henry has persuaded some twenty-four representatives of conservative theology in various countries to state their understanding of revelation. The primary motive is to put an end to an era in which "evangelical polemics became largely negative and sought primarily the approbation of its own conservative constituency rather than the effective penetration of competing spheres of influence;" in short, to secure for the conservative viewpoint a respectful hearing in the larger area of theological discourse. A secondary motive is undoubtedly to reassure the conservative constituency that it has today the support of an impressive array of scholars in various lands.

The editor's preface assumes a unity in the essays which fortunately they fail to document. The most striking feature of the book is the diversity of the viewpoints, some being in radical contradiction to others. G. C. Berkouwer, writing on general and special revelation, defines general revelation as simply that manifestation of God in the creation which, as Calvin says, is visible only to the man who knows God through Jesus Christ, and he leaves as little room for natural revelation and natural theology as Karl Barth does. But in the essay directly following, Gordon H. Clark presents a plan by which he seems to think that he can prove the Bible true by submitting it to a test of its logical consistency, revelation being defined as "divinely revealed information," a doctrine which must make Berkouwer very uneasy. Clark makes absurd statements about Brunner, but in the next essay by Paul K. Jewett the balance is redressed, full justice being done to Brunner and revelation defined not as authentic information but in terms of personal encounter with God. Only at one point does Jewett show any vestige of the old static literalism, in asserting that Genesis 1-3 *must* be history in order to be revelation. Another forward-looking chapter which is like a breath of fresh air in comparison with some others is that of

G. W. Bromiley on "the church doctrine of inspiration." He recognizes the presence in the church through the centuries of a conception of the divinity of the text of Scripture which negates its full humanity and thereby betrays its unbiblical origin. The great mistake of Protestant orthodoxy was to confuse the true doctrine of divine inspiration with this static and unbiblical one.

Neither editor nor essayists acknowledge at any point these important theological differences. If that step were taken, it would break the static and paralyzing false front of absolute oneness in orthodoxy and initiate a vital theological discussion among conservative scholars that would be highly significant for the future.

One point of great weakness in the preface and essays, with few exceptions, is an inability to present with fair objectivity the viewpoint of theological opponents. The writers tilt at straw men. They do not realize that this imperils their own position as soon as their students begin to read these theologians for themselves and discover that they have been misrepresented. There is a strange law that operates in theological debate that encourages a theologian in his own self-interest to be scrupulously fair to the opposing theologians.

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**A Light to the Nations: An Introduction to the Old Testament.** By NORMAN K. GOTTWALD. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959. xxiv-615 pp. \$6.50.

Recent authors of Introductions to the Old Testament are seeing the scope of their task in much broader terms than their predecessors did. The older works usually have an introductory chapter dealing with such problems as the canon and text. The core of these works consists of a critical analysis of the books of the Old Testament with the purpose of establishing such matters as sources, dates, and authors. The literary critics have wrought well and have made many enduring contributions to an understanding of the Old Testament.

Gottwald appreciates the work which has been done by the literary critics and reflects their basic conclusions through his book. He is not among those scholars who are asserting that literary criticism has had its day and is now an outmoded technique; at the same time he recognizes that a proper understanding of the Old Testament involves a broader scope. The essentials of the older "Introductions" are here but these results are set forth as a part of a larger whole which includes the pertinent findings of archeology and the results of studies in Old Testament history and theology.

The title of the book, *A Light to the Nations*, is attractive, but is hardly appropriate for a book dealing with the whole of the Old Testament. Early Israel was not conscious of a world mission but rather looked upon her faith as an instrument of self-realization. The light of the truth concerning God's universal redemptive purpose does shine forth in splendor in such exilic and post-exilic writings as Deutero-Isaiah, Jonah, and Ruth. Even so, one must reluctantly concede that some of their conservative contemporaries, such as Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Malachi, probably reflected the majority opinion in Israel. Unfortunately the forces of reaction won, so far as the Old Testament is concerned, over the liberals who plead valiantly for an inclusive faith. Judaism showed little interest in the Gentile. However, this criticism of the title of Gottwald's book does not apply to the work itself, which throughout reflects valid historical judgments.

Gottwald, as a competent biblical scholar, is aware of the significance of archeology in Old Testament studies. Israel was a relatively late arrival upon the scene in the ancient Near East. Gottwald has demonstrated that we understand the religion of the Old Testament best when we place it against the background of the earlier cultures out of which Israel emerged. For example, the patriarchal traditions of Genesis are studied in the light of similar sociological patterns set forth in the contemporary Nuzi tablets. The book has a brief appendix of Near Eastern texts related to the Old Testament. This will be useful to those who do not have access to Pritchard's comprehensive work in this field.

The best of contemporary European Old Testament scholarship is reflected in Gottwald's work. He evaluates the Psalms, for example, in the light of Gunkel's form analysis and of Mowinckel's monumental study in cultic practices (pp. 506-509). Gottwald's concise yet comprehensive review of the various scholarly interpretations of Deutero-Isaiah's Servant of Yahweh (pp. 413-426) is characteristic of his treatment of the major theological conceptions of the Old Testament.

One of the attractive features of this book is its many illustrations. There are numerous photographs of ancient sites and artifacts pertinent to an understanding of Hebrew culture. The generous supply of maps and charts should be helpful. Many students will appreciate the bibliography (limited to English titles) which is "recommended for further reading" (pp. 553-564).

The scope of the book is impressive. Gottwald has attempted to bring together the results of investigation in the major areas of Old Testament studies. He has succeeded well.

BOONE M. BOWEN

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**The Old Testament as Word of God.** By SIGMUND MOWINCKEL. Translated by Reidar B. Bjornard. New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1959. 144 pp. \$2.75.

This book was a series of lectures, given in 1938, to a nontheological audience by the noted Old Testament scholar of Oslo, Norway. It is newly translated and a few footnotes are added which give certain recent items of bibliography. The same publisher in this country which performed such a service in publishing Dr. Mowinckel's monumental work on messianic theology, *He That Cometh*, now contributes this more modest item as a companion volume for laymen. It is clearly and most instructively written.

The author poses the problem as follows: The Church has received the Old Testament as Holy Scripture. Yet it is a very human book, partaking in full measure of the limitations of human existence, whether in outlook, religious worship, or the transmission of matters of fact. How is it, then, the Word of God? What has made a solution to the problem difficult is a particular theory of inspiration, that is, verbal inspiration, which does not permit any judgment concerning "errors" in God's Word. It is our human concepts, says the author, that have made the problem especially difficult. When one looks closely at Scripture, it can be shown that such a view of inspiration does not accord with its own views of the working of God in the human scene. Instead, God's revelation is precisely in concrete historical situations which make biblical religion a historical religion, and its revelation of God a history of revelation. That is, revelation takes place as a history of revelation; it consequently

is not primarily concerned with theoretical truths about God, but about God's deeds, which are his creative work in history, in reality a history of salvation. If, then, revelation is God's self-giving activity in history, it is most assuredly a vital part of our *theological* task "to obtain the clearest possible *picture of the real history* that lies behind the testimony of the Old Testament." It is this history to which the Old Testament gives meaning, a meaning which excludes materialistic or various ideological views as to history's plan, structure, goal.

This brief summary of the first part of the book provides the content which is further elaborated, step by step, in the remaining pages. It may be noted that the author is dealing with questions people normally ask, and his answers are clearly and logically formulated. For more advanced students, numerous questions will be raised which will lead to further discussion. For example, is there any distinction to be drawn between revelation in the movement of history and doctrines of progress which were related to idealistic structures of thought? Is there a vital category of "revolution," over against "evolution," in biblical experience and confession? The book is filled with allusions to the New Testament, and the final section gives an explication of the meaning of Luther's phrase, *Was Christum Treibet*, as the interpretative key to the Old Testament. Yet at this point discussion of the relation between the Testaments can become warm indeed, with Mowinckel taking the side of historical exegesis, as against what he roundly calls the dishonesty of those who want to read into the Old Testament an allegorical or typological meaning that is not there (e.g., W. Vischer). Problems are generally raised also about the contemporary religious relevance of a *past* history of revelation. Mowinckel's final sections on "God's Word—Concrete and Relevant," and "Revelation as Testimony and Sharing" indicate the direction of his own answer, without providing a complete discussion. All in all, it is a stimulating book, well designed for the purpose it was meant to serve.

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**The Mind of St. Paul.** By WILLIAM BARCLAY. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959. 256 pp. \$3.50.

All but two of the eighteen chapters in this volume have already appeared in *The British Weekly*. Hence they are religious journalism, produced week by week, and aimed at the reading public in the churches of the United Kingdom. This may account for the repetitious style and partly also for the homiletical tone (e.g., pp. 39 and 119). Read once a week, the material would not seem so violent in its impact; read straight through carefully, it makes one feel that one is being banged on the head with a torrent of K.J.V. Pauline texts and the writer's interpretations of them!

The initial chapters describe briefly Paul's two worlds of the Jew and the Gentile; then follow expositions of great themes in his theology (though Paul is not regarded as a systematic theologian). A primary element in the book is discussion of key words, some of it fresh and helpful. Indeed there is so much that is good and true in it, that the preacher in a hurry will love it and the unschooled student will be misled.

Sometimes the author is naïve and vehement in his judgments: Paul would not have distinguished being "in Christ" from being "in the Church, his Body" as Barclay does on p. 124. Frequently we are told what the essence or keystone of Pauline Christianity is, yet it is variously defined as faith, faith which works, the invasive grace of God, the word *Maranatha*, or fellowship with God. The Spirit

or Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and in Judaism between the Testaments is very inadequately treated (p. 176); and this reviewer for one could not accept the view that Paul's concept of the Church developed from the local to the universal (pp. 234ff.).

The most disquieting feature is the misrepresentation of the Old Testament faith and the religion of Judaism in the time of Jesus and Paul. Was Judaism such an unfortunate cradle for infant Christianity as Barclay suggests? Was its religion dominated by "terror and estrangement and distance and enmity," so that Christianity came in with an utterly new teaching (p. 143)? Nothing is said of Abraham the intercessor, or of Hosea's magnificent teaching on *chesed*, the loving-kindness of God, or of salvation in the poetry of the tender Second Isaiah, or of the piety in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, or of the meditations on divine grace and love in the *Thanksgiving Hymns* from Qumrân. We simply cannot make sense of Jesus or Paul in history on the basis of the black-and-white exaggerations of Dr. Barclay. Paul the Christian was proud to be a Christian Jew; and the Bible of the earliest Church was the Old Testament, the book of the Holy Spirit (Heb. 3:7).

Hence, in spite of the fervent religious attitude expressed in this book, and in spite of much that will recommend Paul to those who distrust him and will send people back to read Paul's letters with better understanding, one has to say that there is also here some injudicious scholarship and a learning that is often not up to date with research.

GEORGE JOHNSTON

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**Ordeal of Faith: The Crisis of Church-Going America, 1865-1900.** By FRANCIS P. WEISENBURGER. New York: Philosophical Library, 1959. 380 pp. \$6.00.

United States religious history, foster child of a coldly cordial alliance between church and social history, has lagged well behind these parent disciplines for half a century. It has also failed to keep up with itself, in the sense that the amount of "spadework" in church history has far outrun the development of general ideas. As the author of the present volume remarks, "every large library fairly groans under the weight" of its church historical sources, theses, and literature. And yet any library would be hard put to fill one Five Foot Shelf with worthy volumes of a broadly analytic or even synthetic nature.

In this situation Professor Weisenburger's study of late nineteenth-century American religion comes as both a hopeful sign and a severe disappointment. The encouragement is, first of all, in the author's recognition of the intimate relation between institutional and intellectual history; for chroniclers of American religion have generally slighted one or the other. Even more gratifying is this volume's breadth of focus. As it shows, Darwinism and industrialization were not the sole challenges to faith, nor were the liberal and social gospels the only responses which merit investigation. Professor Weisenburger's cross-sectional approach provides some comparative materials which the teacher of religious history in particular will find useful.

Flaws of historical method and presentation, unfortunately, reduce seriously the effectiveness of the picture drawn within this generally promising framework. That Professor Weisenburger's truly prodigious researches in biographies and in denomina-

national histories and monographs should have led him to so few clear conclusions of any kind is no doubt a further commentary on the value of those narrative sources under which library shelves are groaning. But the fault is also the author's. His aim for "a synthesis of much widely scattered knowledge," while perfectly justified in itself, does not justify his repeated attempts to present individual reactions to "crises" and problems of faith without first carefully delineating the problems themselves. Surely no complex intellectual event can be reliably reported if the reporter does not deal directly with the documents or writings in question; and Professor Weisenburger's discussion of Darwinism, of comparative religions, of religious philosophies, and of such controversial figures as Bushnell and Briggs all suffer from an almost exclusively secondhand treatment. Examination of a few focal documents would have contributed more than many scores of those "life stories of hundreds of individuals" with which the author seeks to illustrate his principal theme.

For despite hints about a mere "synthesis" the volume does purport to have a theme—the "ordeal" or back-against-the-wall theory of nineteenth-century religion which, incidentally, all of us have been probably accepting too slavishly. One wishes that Professor Weisenburger, in dealing with this central idea, had more often brought to bear upon the "scattered" facts before him the equally potent fact of his own informed reflection.

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**Religion in America.** Edited by JOHN COGLEY. New York: Meridian Books, 1959. 288 pp. \$1.45.

This symposium is based on papers delivered at a Seminar on Religion in a Free Society, held at World Affairs Center in New York, May 5-9, 1958, sponsored by The Fund for the Republic, Inc. The title is misleading, and the really weak part of the book is the Introduction, written almost in the style of a commercial plug. It tells with naïve lyricism of the *results* of the five-day seminar (typically American naïveté), but the papers were all written *before* the seminar, whatever was done to prepare them for publication. And certainly there are large areas of currently operating religion (in quotes?) in America that could very well protest that they are not included by even so much as incidental mention.

The titles of the five parts of the volume, with two papers in each (three in Part V) are: Religious Pluralism and Civic Unity; Church and State; The School Question; The Secular Challenge; Religion and Free Society. Representatives of Roman Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant points of view are among the contributors, approximately three each. Page distribution shows something over one hundred pages for the Jewish contributors, about ninety for Roman Catholic, and less than seventy-five for Protestants.

The precise principles of selectivity operating in shaping the program of the original seminar and in the editing of this book are not exactly obvious. But the themes that are presented and discussed in this volume do not always have relevance to America (The United States). The ones that do have relevance include problems of Pluralism-Unity; Church and State; Public Schools and Religion. There are other themes that antedate even the discovery of America: reason in its relation to religion; humanism; prophetic criticism.

Certain questions subtly engage the attention of the reader, a special example

being: To what extent and in what ways (if any) have political and social emphases in America had any influence on Roman Catholic thought and feelings? Another example: Are proponents of the "priesthood of all believers" and of a hierarchical priesthood any nearer conversation on some sort of common ground than they have ever been before? If so, how come? In this book it might be worth an article to make a minute comparison of the papers by J. C. Murray (Roman Catholic) and J. H. Nichols (Protestant), two of the best papers, in different ways. The two shortest (by Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich) are perhaps the most incisive. The longest paper, and the most extensive argument, deals with the problem of separation of Church and State (Leo Pfeffer).

It looks as though the dominant motives were to enlist some big names (e.g., Niebuhr and Tillich) and to present some themes of special interest to editorial management (Church and State; the Schools), rather than to give a comprehensive survey of "Religion in America." It just so happens that one of the most comprehensive and illuminating of surveys is found in the shortest paper (Niebuhr's). Those by Nichols and Herberg are similar in survey scope and power.

All eleven papers are worthy contributions, but they do not collectively give any guarantee of "unity" in American religion in the foreseeable future. It will be hard enough to keep "conversations" going.

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**Religion and American Democracy.** By ROY F. NICHOLS. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959. 108 pp. \$2.50.

What is most important here is that a foremost American historian commits himself to the thesis that religion *vitally* contributes to the determination of history. In assessing the ideas which have consequences, Dr. Roy F. Nichols has given some conception of the range and depth of religious influences.

Whereas other religions are retrospective, as Jung has pointed out, Christianity is the result of a great transformation in the collective psyche, and is forward-looking. A flowering of concern for the future was seen first in the coming of men to a new world, then in the building of a democracy. John Robinson, pastor of the Puritans at Leyden, spoke to new world seekers when he told his charges that Luther and Calvin were important, but new revelation was to come: "I am very confident that the Lord hath more truth and light yet to break out of his Holy Word." Fox came to America in 1672, and was inspired by what he found. Penn began a holy experiment having primarily to do with man's freedom; he promised: "I shall not usurp the right of any, or oppress his person. . . ." And the Declaration of Independence was written under the aegis of the eighteenth-century Deity.

The idea of damnation, as formed by certain Europeans, was incongruous with the rising American society of achievement. Revivalism in the nineteenth century was romantic and emotional, and usually in exalting terms of Arminian doctrine. "One went to God's house," says Dr. Nichols, "to rejoice in the brotherhood of the redeemed. . . ." De Tocqueville, writing in the 1830's, saw here a "voluntary system" in which close relation between church and society was mutually beneficial.

Dr. Nichols touches on many things: the Christian literature for children, the anti-bank crusade, the anti-liquor crusade, the anti-slavery crusade. And the anti-trust crusade. And, almost heartbreakingly our concern, our world crusades, for the sake of democracy. He is convinced that "neither religion nor government should ever

be taken for granted. . . . The moral imperative has become a part of American culture." To understand the relationship between religion and our present problems is crucial; back of us, as Americans, is "three and a half centuries of special experience connected with man's deepest religious emotions." Aware though he is of the contradictions and ironies in American history, Dr. Nichols nevertheless has produced a heartening book.

At the end, Dr. Nichols poses the problem of man and the mass. Man emerging from the mass—this was democracy and individualism. Now there are forces which tend to drive him back into the mass. Can democratic man be strong in his faith? Is our future good because he has not lost all inner certainty?

SAM BRADLEY

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**Torch of Liberty: Twenty-five Years in the Life of the Foreign Born in the U.S.A.** By LOUISE PETTIBONE SMITH. New York: Dwight-King Publishers, 1959. 448 pp. \$5.00.

Presumably the most authentic symbol of the United States of America is the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor—not "The Lady With the Lamp," but more accurately "The Lady With the *Torch*." There is a difference. A lamp is usually a vessel with some device to protect the flame from being blown out. A torch is so vigorous a flame that it defies the wind, and dies only when deprived of oxygen.

Is it not true that the crucial meaning of this country of ours is to be found in its undying dedication to the idea of Freedom? To be sure, "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance," i.e., untiring watchfulness and concern for the freedom of all others as well as of ourselves to think, speak, worship as we please—without being harassed or hounded. The real subversives are not those who deliberately attack our basic civil liberties, but those who insist they are "protecting our way of life" by resorting to repressive practices that are typically totalitarian. The Torch of Liberty can withstand all the blasts of foreign winds of doctrine and deeds; but it cannot long endure domestic asphyxiation.

Fortunately, whenever the domestic atmosphere becomes too saturated with fear, hatred, prejudice, suspicion, envy, when the demagogues begin to flourish and befoul the public mind, and the politicians panic, there arise "the valiant ones" who save the light from extinction—though they are put on subversive lists, misrepresented and maligned, made generally suspect. They do not make the presumptuous mistake of trying to "defend" freedom; they simply try to protect people—the easily victimized, the minorities, the different, the foreign born.

One of these "valiant ones" has given us an invaluable documentary in book form that is as fascinating as it is factual, and as timely as it is trustworthy. It is the history of the last quarter-century struggle of a dauntless organization devoted to the maintenance and extension of the rights of foreign-born Americans—The American Committee for Protection of the Foreign Born.

Dr. Louise Pettibone Smith is more than the author of this knowledgeable, well-written book; she is the incarnation of the heroic spirit that permeates its pages. Brilliant scholar, beloved Professor of Biblical History at Wellesley College for nearly four decades, world traveler, now professor emeritus, she identifies herself with these ignorant, bedeviled "foreigners." They are not "subversives," "Communists,"

"nogoodnicks," as the Commissioner of Integration calls them. To her they are people, each one of divine origin, limitless possibilities, infinite worth. She writes about them, loves them, defends them. She takes seriously that supreme test that the Master says is the final judgment: "Inasmuch as you did it, or didn't do it, unto one of the least of these, you did it, or didn't do it, to Me." The book is a must—and the author is magnificent.

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**The Paradise Tree.** By GERALD VANN, O.P. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1959.

320 pp. \$4.00.

There is a widespread Protestant impression that Roman Catholic thought and devotion are hidebound and unfree. This could be true of many of the rank and file in both communions. But certain contemporary Catholic thinkers are exercising a broader freedom of imagination and sympathy than most Protestants. However Protestants may boggle at the crystallizations of Mariological speculation into rigid dogma, the proliferation of creative thought in this field deserves respect from anyone with a sense of the poetry inherent in the human soul. There is here a warm apprehension of the varied ways in which the Divine Love actually reaches man through his immemorial cherished forms of imagery, which is missed by the arid literalness of Protestant dogmatism. Gertrud von le Fort's *The Eternal Woman*, a brief but luminous work, could serve as an eye opener to Protestants.

The present work, *The Paradise Tree*, by an English Dominican, is another case in point. Subtitled "On Living the Symbols of the Church," it stands on the conviction that the immemorial myths and folklore of the race have expressed a universal pattern of striving toward the more abundant life, toward Divine life; and demonstrates that the Church, far from by-passing all this psychic material which is man's natural heritage, finds it in its highest synthesis precisely in the New Testament events which were not myth but history; it is abundantly present in Scripture and in liturgy as a channel of Divine grace. But in this age of "scientism" the fact is mostly ignored even by believers, to the peril of our civilization. There is need to rediscover the depths of experience inherent in the life of the Church, the "mythic dimension in Christian sacramentalism." The works of Mircéa Eliade and Hugo Rahner in comparative religion, as well as Jung and his disciples, are cited as showing how "symbol-thinking is both irreplaceable and inescapable."

"I am come that they may have life," our Lord said; but they will not have life unless they learn and live the pattern." To this end Father Vann proceeds to examine the rich symbolic content of various aspects of the Faith, bringing out the dynamic overtones and implications of which we are mostly all too unaware. He traces the Mystery through the Christ-life, the Commandments, and the Sacraments; then devotes the latter two-thirds of the book to the Mass, examining each section of it. These subjects lead also into moral and practical aspects of "living the pattern," and suggestions for devotional life.

The author leans too heavily on long quotations from other authorities, and his style is rather unstructured and diffuse. But he says much that is worth pondering. He does not overemphasize Mary; but in his final chapter, "Communion" (p. 294), he gives an unusual interpretation of her significance which this Protestant reviewer finds worth thinking about.

E. H. L.

Professor Oscar Cullmann's famous lecture, *A Message to Catholics and Protestants*, has been published in book form by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company (Grand Rapids) at \$1.50. He delivered the substance of it first before an ecumenical group in Zurich in January, 1957, during the yearly week of prayer for Christian unity; later in Rome and Paris, and last year at Union Seminary in New York. His proposal, based on Paul's "collection for the saints" in Jerusalem which symbolized and helped preserve unity between the first Jewish and Gentile Christians, is that Protestant groups should annually make offerings for needy Catholics, and Catholics for needy Protestants. This reciprocal offering would express and further Christian love and solidarity between the "separated brethren." Dr. Cullmann tells of very heartening consequences in localities where the practice has been tried, and he deals with difficulties and objections raised by both sides.

Meridian Books has brought out *The Cultural Significance of the Reformation*, by Karl Holl (1866-1926), professor of church history in Berlin, a colleague and friend of Harnack. This is a translation of his most influential work, *Die Kulturbedeutung der Reformation*. Dr. Wilhelm Pauck in a lucid preface explains how this work constituted a bridge between liberals and Barthians; how Holl concentrated on the young Luther and played a significant role in the present Luther-renaissance; how, differing from Troeltsch, he felt that Luther really inaugurated the modern world. Paperback, \$1.25.

Another book by T. F. Torrance has been published here by Eerdmans—*The Apocalypse Today* (\$3.00)—a book of sermons. He feels that, despite the strong influence of the liturgical language of the Old Testament, the significance of the Apocalypse is thoroughly Christological, and the author probably John the disciple. He seeks to "expound the visions in their own spirit" and "set forth their meaning in the context of our present life" as "the very Word of the living God, the God of history."

Horton Davies, British professor at Princeton who has written on the English Free Churches and on Christian Worship, has now written *A Mirror of the Ministry in Modern Novels* (Oxford, \$3.75), a study of Protestant and Catholic clergymen depicted by fifteen modern novelists. He analyzes Dimmesdale in *The Scarlet Letter*, Sinclair Lewis' *Elmer Gantry*, Bernanos' *Diary of a Country Priest*, Graham Greene's backsliding priest in *The Power and the Glory*, etc. He welcomes critical novelists who puncture the church's complacency by true-to-life portrayals of faulty clergymen, but deprecates mere stereotypes reflecting only the novelist's prejudices.

*The Dead Sea Community*, by Kurt Schubert (Harper, \$3.75), is called by Millar Burrows "a solid, condensed discussion for serious readers by a competent scholar." Professor of Jewish Religion and Culture at the University of Vienna (incidentally a Catholic), Schubert knows well the field of Judaism in the early Christian period and has done research on the Scrolls from the beginning. He is in position to give a reliable assessment of the work of these ten years; he discusses the beliefs and practices of the community and keeps his balance between Qumrân's similarities to and differences from the New Testament church.

John Casteel has given us another luminous book on ways of spiritual renewal: *Renewal in Retreats*, Association Press, \$4.50. "The purpose of retreat is the deepening of communion with God, with other persons, and with oneself." He treats of "Waiting on God," "Communion in Christ," and "Coming to Oneself"; then takes up various aspects of the proper balancing and the practical planning of retreats.

E. H. L.









